THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

JOHN GAY.

INCLUDING HIS

FABLES.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

WITH THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

FROM THE ROYAL QUARTO EDITION OF 1720.

7137

His jocamur, ludimus, amamus, dolemus, querimur, irafcimur; defcribimus aliquid modo preffius, modo elatius: atque ipfa varietate tentamus efficere, ut alia aliis, quædam fortaffe omnibus placeant. PLIN. EPIST.

Of manners gentle, of affections mild;
In wit a man, fimplicity a child:
With native humour temp'ring virtuous rage;
Form'd to delight at once, and lafh the age:
Above temptation in a low eftate,
And uncorrupted ev'n amongft the great:
A fafe companion, and an eafy friend:
Unblam'd thro' life, lamented in thy end:
Thefe are thy honours!------

POPE.

Bell's second edition.

VOL. II.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Pre's, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1784.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

JOHN GAY.

VOL. III.

CONTAINING HIS

FABLES.

IN TWO PARTS.

Shall not my Fables censure vice,
Because a knave is over nice——
If I lash vice in gen'ral fiction,
Is't I apply, or self-conviction?
Brutes are my theme. Am I to blame,
If men in morals are the same?
I no man call or ape or ass;
'Tis his own conscience holds the glass.
Thus void of all offence I write:
Who claims the Fable knows his right.

PROL. TO SHEP. WEEK.

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Anno 1784.

INTRODUCTION
TO THE
FABLES

3

PART FIRST.

THE SHEPHERD AND THE PHILOSOPHER.

REMOTE from cities liv'd a fwain,
Unvex'd with all the cares of gain;
His head was filver'd o'er with age,
And long experience made him fage;
In fummer's heat, and winter's cold,
He fed his flock, and penn'd the fold:
His hours in cheerful labour flew,
Nor envy nor ambition knew:
His wifdom and his honeft fame
Thro' all the country rais'd his name.
A deep philofopher (whofe rules
Of moral life were drawn from fchools)
The Shepherd's homely cottage fought,
And thus explor'd his reach of thought.
Whence is thy learning? hath thy toil
O'er books confum'd the midnight oil?

Haſt thou old Greece and Rome ſurvey'd,
And the vaſt ſenſe of Plato weigh'd?
Hath Socrates thy ſoul refin'd,
And haſt thou fathom'd Tully's mind?
Or, like the wiſe Ulyſſes, thrown,
By various fates, on realms unknown,
Haſt thou through many cities ſtray'd,
Their cuſtoms, laws, and manners, weigh'd?
  The Shepherd modeſtly reply'd,
I ne'er the paths of learning try'd;
Nor have I roam'd in foreign parts
To read mankind, their laws and arts;
For man is practis'd in diſguiſe,
He cheats the moſt diſcerning eyes;
Who by that ſearch ſhall wiſer grow,
When we ourſelves can never know?
The little knowledge I have gain'd
Was all from ſimple Nature drain'd;
Hence my life's maxims took their riſe,
Hence grew my ſettled hate to vice.
  The daily labours of the bee
Awake my ſoul to induſtry:
Who can obſerve the careful ant,
And not provide for future want?
My dog (the truſtieſt of his kind)
With gratitude inflames my mind:
I mark his true, his faithful way,
And in my ſervice copy Tray.

In conſtancy and nuptial love
I learn my duty from the dove.
The hen, who from the chilly air,
With pious wing protects her care,
And ev'ry fowl that flies at large
Inſtructs me in a parent's charge.
  From Nature, too, I take my rule,
To ſhun contempt and ridicule.
I never, with important air,
In converſation overbear.
Can grave and formal paſs for wiſe
When men the ſolemn owl deſpiſe?
My tongue within my lips I rein;
For who talks much muſt talk in vain.
We from the wordy torrent fly:
Who liſtens to the chatt'ring pie?
Nor would I, with felonious ſlight,
By ſtealth invade my neighbour's right.
Rapacious animals we hate:
Kites, hawks, and wolves, deſerve their fate.
Do not we juſt abhorrence find
Againſt the toad and ſerpent kind?
But Envy, Calumny, and Spite,
Bear ſtronger venom in their bite.
Thus ev'ry object of creation
Can furniſh hints to contemplation;
And from the moſt minute and mean
A virtuous mind can morals glean.

Thy fame is juſt, the Sage replies;
Thy virtue proves thee truly wiſe.
Pride often guides the author's pen;
Books as affected are as men:
But he who ſtudies Nature's laws
From certain truth his maxims draws;
And thoſe, without our ſchools, ſuffice
To make men moral, good and wiſe.

TO HIS HIGHNESS

WILLIAM

DUKE OF CUMBERLAND.

FABLE I.

THE LION, THE TIGER, AND THE TRAVELLER.

Accept, young Prince! the moral lay,
And in these Tales mankind survey;
With early virtues plant your breast,
The specious arts of vice detest.
Princes, like beauties, from their youth
Are strangers to the voice of Truth.
Learn to contemn all praise betimes,
For flattery's the nurse of crimes:
Friendship by sweet reproof is shown;
(A virtue never near a throne)
In courts such freedom must offend;
There none presumes to be a friend.
To those of your exalted station
Each courtier is a dedication.
Must I too flatter like the rest,
And turn my morals to a jest?
The Muse disdains to steal from those
Who thrive in courts by fulsome prose.
But shall I hide your real praise,
Or tell you what a nation says?

They in your infant boſom trace
The virtues of your royal race;
In the fair dawning of your mind
Diſcern you gen'rous, mild, and kind:
They ſee you grieve to hear diſtreſs,
And pant already to redreſs.
Go on, the height of good attain,
Nor let a nation hope in vain:
For hence we juſtly may preſage
The virtues of a riper age.
True courage ſhall your boſom fire,
And future actions own your ſire.
Cowards are cruel, but the brave
Love mercy, and delight to ſave.
  A tiger, roaming for his prey,
Sprung on a Trav'ller in the way;
The proſtrate game a Lion ſpies,
And on the greedy tyrant flies:
With mingled roar reſounds the wood,
Their teeth, their claws, diſtil with blood;
Till, vanquiſh'd by the Lion's ſtrength,
The ſpotted foe extends his length.
The man beſought the ſhaggy lord,
And on his knees for life implor'd.
His life the gen'rous hero gave.
Together walking to his cave,
The Lion thus beſpoke his gueſt:
  What hardy beaſt ſhall dare conteſt

My matchless strength? you saw the fight,
And must attest my pow'r and right.
Forc'd to forego their native home,
My starving slaves at distance roam.
Within these woods I reign alone;
The boundless forest is my own.
Bears, wolves, and all the savage brood,
Have dy'd the regal den with blood.
These carcasses on either hand,
Those bones that whiten all the land,
My former deeds and triumphs tell,
Beneath these jaws what numbers fell.
True, says the Man, the strength I saw
Might well the brutal nation awe;
But shall a monarch, brave, like you,
Place glory in so false a view?
Robbers invade their neighbours' right.
Be lov'd; let justice bound your might.
Mean are ambitious heroes' boasts
Of wasted lands and slaughter'd hosts.
Pirates their pow'r by murders gain;
Wise kings by love and mercy reign.
To me your clemency hath shown
The virtue worthy of a throne.
Heav'n gives you pow'r above the rest,
Like Heav'n, to succour the distrest.
The case is plain, the monarch said;
False glory hath my youth misled;

For beasts of prey, a servile train,
Have been the flatt'rers of my reign.
You reason well. Yet tell me, Friend,
Did ever you in courts attend?
For all my fawning rogues agree
That human heroes rule like me.

FABLE II.

THE SPANIEL AND THE CAMELION.

A SPANIEL, bred with all the care
That waits upon a fav'rite heir,
Ne'er felt Correction's rigid hand;
Indulg'd to disobey command,
In pamper'd ease his hours were spent:
He never knew what learning meant.
Such forward airs, so pert, so smart,
Were sure to win his lady's heart;
Each little mischief gain'd him praise;
How pretty were his fawning ways!
The wind was south, the morning fair,
He ventures forth to take the air:
He ranges all the meadow round,
And rolls upon the softest ground;
When near him a Camelion seen,
Was scarce distinguish'd from the green.
Dear emblem of the flatt'ring host,
What, live with clowns! a genius lost!

To cities and the court repair;
A fortune cannot fail thee there:
Preferment shall thy talents crown;
Believe me, Friend; I know the Town.
Sir, says the Sycophant, like you,
Of old, politer life I knew:
Like you, a courtier born and bred,
Kings lean'd their ear to what I said.
My whisper always met success;
The ladies prais'd me for address.
I knew to hit each courtier's passion,
And flatter'd ev'ry vice in fashion:
But Jove, who hates the liar's ways,
At once cut short my prosp'rous days,
And, sentenc'd to retain my nature,
Transform'd me to this crawling creature.
Doom'd to a life obscure and mean,
I wander in the sylvan scene;
For Jove the heart alone regards;
He punishes what man rewards.
How diff'rent is thy case and mine?
With men at least you sup and dine,
While I, condemn'd to thinnest fare,
Like those I flatter'd, feed on air.

FABLE III.

THE MOTHER, THE NURSE, AND THE FAIRY.

Give me a son. The blessing sent,
Were ever parents more content?
How partial are their doting eyes!
No child is half so fair and wise.
Wak'd to the morning's pleasing care,
The mother rose and sought her heir.
She saw the Nurse like one possest,
With wringing hands and sobbing breast.
Sure some disaster has befell;
Speak Nurse; I hope the boy is well.
Dear Madam, think not me to blame;
Invisible the Fairy came:
Your precious babe is hence convey'd,
And in the place a changeling laid.
Where are the father's mouth and nose?
The mother's eyes as black as sloes?
See, here, a shocking awkward creature,
That speaks a fool in ev'ry feature.
The woman's blind, the Mother cries;
I see wit sparkle in his eyes.
Lord, Madam, what a squinting leer!
No doubt the Fairy hath been here.
Just as she spoke, a pigmy sprite
Pops thro' the keyhole swift as light;

Perch'd on the cradle's top he ſtands,
And thus her folly reprimands.
  Whence ſprung the vain conceited lie,
That we the world with fools ſupply?
What! give our ſprightly race away
For the dull helpleſs ſons of Clay!
Beſides, by partial fondneſs ſhown,
Like you we dote upon our own.
Where yet was ever found a mother
Who 'd give her booby for another?
And ſhould we change with human breed,
Well might we paſs for fools indeed.

FABLE IV.

THE EAGLE AND THE ASSEMBLY OF ANIMALS.

As Jupiter's all-ſeeing eye
Survey'd the worlds beneath the ſky,
From this ſmall ſpeck of earth were ſent
Murmurs and ſounds of diſcontent;
For ev'ry thing alive complain'd
That he the hardeſt life ſuſtain'd.
  Jove calls his eagle. At the word
Before him ſtands the royal bird.
The bird, obedient, from heav'n's height,
Downward directs his rapid flight;
Then cited ev'ry living thing
To hear the mandates of his king.

Ungrateful Creatures! whence arise
These murmurs which offend the Skies?
Why this disorder? say the cause;
For just are Jove's eternal laws.
Let each his discontent reveal;
To yon' sour Dog I first appeal.
Hard is my lot the hound replies;
On what fleet nerves the Greyhound flies!
While I, with weary step and slow,
O'er plains, and vales, and mountains, go.
The morning sees my chase begun,
Nor ends it till the setting sun.
When (says the Greyhound) I pursue,
My game is lost, or caught in view;
Beyond my sight the prey's secure;
The hound is slow, but always sure;
And had I his sagacious scent,
Jove ne'er had heard my discontent.
The Lion crav'd the Fox's art;
The Fox the Lion's force and heart:
The Cock implor'd the Pigeon's flight,
Whose wings were rapid, strong, and light:
The Pigeon strength of wing despis'd,
And the Cock's matchless valour priz'd:
The Fishes wish'd to graze the plain,
The Beasts to skim beneath the main:
Thus, envious of another's state,
Each blam'd the partial hand of Fate.

The bird of heav'n then cry'd aloud,
Jove bids diſperſe the murm'ring crowd:
The God rejects your idle prayers.
Would ye, rebellious Mutineers!
Entirely change your name and nature,
And be the very envy'd creature?
What, ſilent all, and none conſent?
Be happy, then, and learn content;
Nor imitate the reſtleſs mind,
And proud ambition, of mankind.

FABLE V.

THE WILD BOAR AND THE RAM.

Against an elm a ſheep was ty'd,
The butcher's knife in blood was dy'd;
The patient flock, in ſilent fright,
From far beheld the horrid ſight.
A ſavage Boar, who near them ſtood,
Thus mock'd to ſcorn the fleecy brood.
  All cowards ſhould be ſerv'd like you.
See, ſee, your murd'rer is in view:
With purple hands, and reeking knife,
He ſtrips the ſkin, yet warm with life.
Your quarter'd ſires, your bleeding dams,
The dying bleat of harmleſs lambs,
Call for revenge. O ſtupid Race!
The heart that wants revenge is baſe.

I grant, an ancient ram replies,
We bear no terrour in our eyes;
Yet think us not of ſoul ſo tame,
Which no repeated wrongs inflame;
Inſenſible of ev'ry ill,
Becauſe we want thy tuſks to kill.
Know, thoſe who violence purſue,
Give to themſelves the vengeance due;
For in theſe maſſacres they find
The two chief plagues that waſte mankind.
Our ſkin ſupplies the wrangling bar,
It wakes their ſlumb'ring ſons to war;
And well revenge may reſt contented,
Since drums and parchment were invented.

FABLE VI.

THE MISER AND PLUTUS.

The wind was high, the window ſhakes,
With ſudden ſtart the Miſer wakes;
Along the ſilent room he ſtalks,
Looks back, and trembles as he walks.
Each lock and ev'ry bolt he tries,
In ev'ry creek and corner pries,
Then opes the cheſt with treaſure ſtor'd,
And ſtands in rapture o'er his hoard.
But now with ſudden qualms poſſeſt,
He wrings his hands, he beats his breaſt;

By conſcience ſtung he wildly ſtares,
And thus his guilty ſoul declares.
Had the deep earth her ſtores confin'd,
This heart had known ſweet peace of mind.
But virtue's ſold. Good Gods! what price
Can recompenſe the pangs of vice!
O bane of good! ſeducing cheat!
Can man, weak man, thy pow'r defeat?
Gold baniſh'd honour from the mind,
And only left the name behind;
Gold ſow'd the world with ev'ry ill;
Gold taught the murd'rer's ſword to kill:
'Twas gold inſtructed coward hearts
In treach'ry's more pernicious arts.
Who can recount the miſchiefs o'er?
Virtue reſides on earth no more!
He ſpoke, and ſigh'd. In angry mood
Plutus, his god, before him ſtood.
The Miſer, trembling, lock'd his cheſt;
The Viſion frown'd, and thus addreſs'd.
Whence is this vile ungrateful rant,
Each ſordid raſcal's daily cant?
Did I, baſe Wretch! corrupt mankind?
The fault's in thy rapacious mind.
Becauſe my bleſſings are abus'd,
Muſt I be cenſur'd, curs'd, accus'd?
Ev'n Virtue's ſelf by knaves is made
A cloak to carry on the trade;

And pow'r (when lodg'd in their poſſeſſion)
Grows tyranny and rank oppreſſion.
Thus, when the villain crams his cheſt,
Gold is the canker of the breaſt;
'Tis av'rice, inſolence, and pride,
And ev'ry ſhocking vice beſide:
But when to virtuous hands 't is giv'n,
It bleſſes, like the dews of heav'n:
Like Heav'n it hears the orphan's cries,
And wipes the tears from widows' eyes.
Their crimes on gold ſhall Miſers lay,
Who pawn'd their ſordid ſouls for pay?
Let bravoes then, when blood is ſpilt,
Upbraid the paſſive ſoul with guilt.

FABLE VII.

THE LION, THE FOX, AND THE GEESE.

A LION, tir'd with ſtate-affairs,
Quite ſick of pomp, and worn with cares,
Reſolv'd (remote from noiſe and ſtrife)
In peace to paſs his latter life.
It was proclaim'd; the day was ſet:
Behold the gen'ral council met.
The Fox was viceroy nam'd. The crowd
To the new regent humbly bow'd.
Wolves, bears, and mighty tigers bend,
And ſtrive who moſt ſhall condeſcend.

He ſtraight aſſumes a ſolemn grace,
Collects his wiſdom in his face;
The crowd admire his wit, his ſenſe;
Each word hath weight and conſequence.
The flatt'rer all his art diſplays:
He who hath pow'r is ſure of praiſe.
A Fox ſtept forth before the reſt,
And thus the ſervile throng addreſt.
How vaſt his talents, born to rule,
And train'd in Virtue's honeſt ſchool!
What clemency his temper ſways!
How uncorrupt are all his ways!
Beneath his conduct and command
Rapine ſhall ceaſe to waſte the land.
His brain hath ſtratagem and art;
Prudence and mercy rule his heart.
What bleſſings muſt attend the nation
Under this good adminiſtration!
He ſaid. A Gooſe, who diſtant ſtood,
Harangu'd apart the cackling brood.
Whene'er I hear a knave commend,
He bids me ſhun his worthy friend.
What praiſe! what mighty commendation!
But 't was a Fox who ſpoke th' oration.
Foxes this government may prize
As gentle, plentiful, and wiſe;
If they enjoy the ſweets, 't is plain
We Geeſe muſt feel a tyrant reign.

What havock now ſhall thin our race,
When ev'ry petty clerk in place,
To prove his taſte, and ſeem polite,
Will feed on Geeſe both noon and night?

FABLE VIII.

THE LADY AND THE WASP.

WHAT whiſpers muſt the Beauty bear!
What hourly nonſenſe haunts her ear!
Where'er her eyes diſpenſe their charms,
Impertinence around her ſwarms.
Did not the tender nonſenſe ſtrike,
Contempt and ſcorn might look diſlike;
Forbidding airs might thin the place,
The ſlighteſt flap a fly can chaſe:
But who can drive the num'rous breed?
Chaſe one, another will ſucceed.
Who knows a fool, muſt know his brother;
One fop will recommend another:
And with this plague ſhe 's rightly curſt,
Becauſe ſhe liſten'd to the firſt.
  As Doris, at her toilet's duty,
Sate meditating on her beauty,
She now was penſive, now was gay,
And loll'd the ſultry hours away.
  As thus in indolence ſhe lies,
A giddy Waſp around her flies.

He now advances, now retires,
Now to her neck and cheek aspires.
Her fan in vain defends her charms;
Swift he returns, again alarms;
For by repulse he bolder grew,
Perch'd on her lip, and sipt the dew.
She frowns; she frets. Good Gods! she cries,
Protect me from these teasing flies:
Of all the plagues that Heav'n hath sent,
A Wasp is most impertinent.
The hov'ring insect thus complain'd
Am I then slighted, scorn'd, disdain'd?
Can such offence your anger wake?
'Twas beauty caus'd the bold mistake.
Those cherry lips that breathe perfume,
That cheek so ripe with youthful bloom,
Made me with strong desire pursue
The fairest peach that ever grew.
Strike him not, Jenny, Doris cries,
Nor murder Wasps like vulgar flies;
For tho' he 's free (to do him right)
The creature 's civil and polite.
In ecstasies away he posts;
Where'er he came the favour boasts;
Brags how her sweetest tea he sips,
And shows the sugar on his lips.
The hint alarm'd the forward crew;
Sure of success, away they flew;

They ſhare the dainties of the day,
Round her with airy muſick play:
And now they flutter, now they reſt,
Now ſoar again, and ſkim her breaſt.
Nor were they baniſh'd till ſhe found
That Waſps have ſtings, and felt the Wound.

FABLE IX.

THE BULL AND THE MASTIFF.

Seek you to train your fav'rite boy?
Each caution, ev'ry care employ;
And ere you venture to confide,
Let his preceptor's heart be try'd:
Weigh well his manners, life and ſcope;
On theſe depends thy future hope.
  As on a time, in peaceful reign,
A Bull enjoy'd the flow'ry plain,
A Maſtiff paſs'd; inflam'd with ire,
His eyeballs ſhot indignant fire;
He foam'd, he rag'd with thirſt of blood.
  Spurning the ground the monarch ſtood,
And roar'd aloud. Suſpend the fight;
In a whole ſkin go ſleep to-night;
Or tell me, ere the battle rage,
What wrongs provoke thee to engage?
Is it ambition fires thy breaſt,
Or avarice, that ne'er can reſt?

From theſe alone unjuſtly ſprings
The world-deſtroying wrath of kings.
 The ſurly Maſtiff thus returns;
Within my boſom glory burns.
Like heroes of eternal name,
Whom poets ſing, I fight for fame.
The butcher's ſpirit-ſtirring mind
To daily war my youth inclin'd;
He train'd me to heroic deed,
Taught me to conquer or to bleed.
 Curs'd Dog, the Bull reply'd, no more
I wonder at thy thirſt of gore;
For thou (beneath a butcher train'd,
Whoſe hands with cruelty are ſtain'd,
His daily murders in thy view)
Muſt, like thy tutor, blood purſue.
Take then thy fate. With goring wound
At once he lifts him from the ground:
Aloft the ſprawling hero flies,
Mangled he falls, he howls, and dies.

FABLE X.

THE ELEPHANT AND THE BOOKSELLER.

The man who with undaunted toils
Sails unknown ſeas to unknown ſoils,
With various wonders feaſts his ſight:
What ſtranger wonders does he write!

We read, and in deſcription view
Creatures which Adam never knew;
For when we riſk no contradiction,
It prompts the tongue to deal in fiction.
Thoſe things that ſtartle me or you
I grant are ſtrange, yet may be true.
Who doubts that Elephants are found
For ſcience and for ſenſe renown'd!
Borri records their ſtrength of parts,
Extent of thought, and ſkill in arts;
How they perform the law's decrees,
And ſave the ſtate the hangman's fees;
And how by travel underſtand
The language of another land.
Let thoſe who queſtion this report
To Pliny's ancient page reſort.
How learn'd was that ſagacious breed!
Who now (like them) the Greek can read!
   As one of theſe, in days of yore,
Rummag'd a ſhop of learning o'er,
Not, like our modern dealers, minding
Only the margin's breadth and binding,
A book his curious eye detains,
Where, with exacteſt care and pains,
Were ev'ry beaſt and bird pourtray'd
That e'er the ſearch of man ſurvey'd;
Their natures and their powers were writ
With all the pride of human wit:

The page he with attention spread,
And thus remark'd on what he read.
 Man with strong reason is endow'd,
A beast scarce instinct is allow'd:
But let this author's worth be try'd,
'Tis plain that neither was his guide.
Can he discern the diff'rent natures,
And weigh the pow'r of other creatures,
Who by the partial work hath shown
He knows so little of his own?
How falsely is the spaniel drawn!
Did man from him first learn to fawn?
A dog proficient in the trade!
He the chief flatt'rer Nature made!
Go, Man! the ways of courts discern,
You'll find a spaniel still might learn.
How can the fox's theft and plunder
Provoke his censure or his wonder?
From courtiers' tricks and lawyers' arts
The fox might well improve his parts.
The lion, wolf, and tyger's brood,
He curses, for their thirst of blood:
But is not man to man a prey?
Beasts kill for hunger, men for pay.
 The Bookseller, who heard him speak,
And saw him turn a page of Greek,
Thought, what a genius have I found!
Then thus address'd with bow profound.

Learn'd Sir, if you'd employ your pen
Againſt the ſenſeleſs ſons of men,
Or write the hiſtory of Siam,
No man is better pay than I am;
Or, ſince you're learn'd in Greek, let's ſee
Something againſt the Trinity;
When wrinkling with a ſneer his trunk,
Friend, quoth the Elephant, you're drunk:
E'en keep your money, and be wiſe;
Leave man on man to criticiſe;
For that you ne'er can want a pen
Among the ſenſeleſs ſons of men.
They unprovok'd will court the fray;
Envy's a ſharper ſpur than pay.
No author ever ſpar'd a brother;
Wits are gamecocks to one another.

FABLE XI.

THE PEACOCK, THE TURKEY, AND THE GOOSE.

In beauty faults conſpicuous grow;
The ſmalleſt ſpeck is ſeen on ſnow.
As near a barn, by hunger led,
A Peacock with the poultry fed,
ll view'd him with an envious eye,
nd mock'd his gaudy pageantry.
e, conſcious of ſuperiour merit,
Contemns their baſe reviling ſpirit;

His ſtate and dignity aſſumes,
And to the ſun diſplays his plumes,
Which, like the heav'n's o'erarching ſkies,
Are ſpangled with a thouſand eyes.
The circling rays, and vary'd light,
At once confound their dazzled ſight;
On ev'ry tongue detraction burns,
And malice prompts their ſpleen by turns.
Mark with what inſolence and pride
The creature takes his haughty ſtride,
The Turkey cries: Can ſpleen contain?
Sure never bird was half ſo vain.
But were intrinſick merit ſeen,
We Turkeys have the whiter ſkin.
From tongue to tongue they caught abuſe,
And next was heard the hiſſing Gooſe.
What hideous legs! what filthy claws!
I ſcorn to cenſure little flaws.
Then what a horrid ſqualling throat!
Ev'n owls are frighted at the note.
True. Thoſe are faults, the Peacock cries;
My ſcream, my ſhanks, you may deſpiſe;
But ſuch blind criticks rail in vain.
What, overlook my radiant train!
Know, did my legs (your ſcorn and ſport)
The Turkey or the Gooſe ſupport,
And did ye ſcream with harſher ſound,
Thoſe faults in you had ne'er been found:

To all apparent beauties blind,
Each blemish strikes an envious mind.
Thus in assemblies have I seen
A nymph of brightest charms and mien
Wake envy in each ugly face,
And buzzing scandal fills the place.

FABLE XII.

CUPID, HYMEN, AND PLUTUS.

As Cupid in Cythera's grove
Employ'd the lesser pow'rs of Love,
Some shape the bow, or fit the string,
Some give the taper shaft its wing,
Or turn the polish'd quiver's mould,
Or head the darts with temper'd gold.
Amidst their toil and various care
Thus Hymen, with assuming air,
Address'd the god. Thou purblind Chit,
Of awkward and ill-judging wit,
If matches are not better made,
At once I must forswear my trade.
You send me such ill-coupled folks,
That 'tis a shame to sell them yokes.
They squabble for a pin, a feather,
And wonder how they came together.
The husband's sullen, dogged, shy,
The wife grows flippant in reply:

He loves command and due restriction,
And she as well likes contradiction:
She never slavishly submits;
She 'll have her will, or have her fits.
He this way tugs, she th' other draws;
The man grows jealous, and with cause.
Nothing can save him but divorce;
And here the wife complies of course.
  When, says the Boy, had I to do
With either your affairs or you?
I never idly spend my darts;
You trade in mercenary hearts.
For settlements the lawyer 's fee'd;
Is my hand witness to the deed?
If they like cat and dog agree,
Go rail at Plutus, not at me.
  Plutus appear'd, and said, 'Tis true,
In marriage gold is all their view;
They seek not beauty, wit, or sense,
And love is seldom the pretence.
All offer incense at my shrine,
And I alone the bargain sign.
How can Belinda blame her fate?
She only ask'd a great estate.
Doris was rich enough, 'tis true;
Her lord must give her title too:
And ev'ry man, or rich or poor,
A fortune asks, and asks no more.

Av'rice, whatever ſhape it bears,
Muſt ſtill be coupled with its cares.

FABLE XIII.

THE TAME STAG.

As a young Stag the thicket paſt,
The branches held his antlers faſt;
A clown who ſaw the captive hung,
Acroſs the horns his halter flung.
Now ſafely hamper'd in the cord,
He bore the preſent to his lord.
His lord was pleas'd, as was the clown,
When he was tipp'd with half-a-crown.
The Stag was brought before his wife;
The tender lady begg'd his life.
How ſleek 's the ſkin! how ſpeck'd like ermine!
Sure never creature was ſo charming!
At firſt within the yard confin'd,
He flies and hides from all mankind;
Now bolder grown, with fix'd amaze,
And diſtant awe, preſumes to gaze:
Munches the linen on the lines,
And on a hood or apron dines:
He ſteals my little maſter's bread,
Follows the ſervants to be fed:
Nearer and nearer now he ſtands,
To feel the praiſe of patting hands;

Examines ev'ry fiſt for meat,
And, tho' repuls'd, diſdains retreat:
Attacks again with levell'd horns,
And man, that was his terrour, ſcorns.
Such is the country maiden's fright,
When firſt a Redcoat is in ſight;
Behind the door ſhe hides her face,
Next time at diſtance eyes the lace:
She now can all his terrours ſtand,
Nor from his ſqueeze withdraws her hand.
She plays familiar in his arms,
And ev'ry ſoldier hath his charms.
From tent to tent ſhe ſpreads her flame;
For cuſtom conquers fear and ſhame.

FABLE XIV.

THE MONKEY WHO HAD SEEN THE WORLD.

A MONKEY, to reform the times,
Reſolv'd to viſit foreign climes;
For men in diſtant regions roam
To bring politer manners home.
So forth he fares, all toil defies:
Misfortune ſerves to make us wiſe.
At length the treach'rous ſnare was laid;
Poor Pug was caught, to Town convey'd;
There ſold. (How envy'd was his doom,
Made captive in a lady's room!)

Proud, as a lover, of his chains,
He day by day her favour gains.
Whene'er the duty of the day
The toilet calls, with mimick play
He twirls her knots, he cracks her fan,
Like any other gentleman.
In viſits, too, his parts and wit,
When jeſts grew dull, were ſure to hit.
Proud with applauſe, he thought his mind
In ev'ry courtly art refin'd;
Like Orpheus, burnt with publick zeal,
To civilize the Monkey weal;
So watch'd occaſion, broke his chain,
And ſought his native woods again.
The hairy ſylvans round him preſs,
Aſtoniſh'd at his ſtrut and dreſs.
Some praiſe his ſleeve, and others glote
Upon his rich embroider'd coat,
His dapper periwig commending,
With the black tail behind depending;
His powder'd back, above, below,
Like hoary froſts, or fleecy ſnow;
But all, with envy and deſire,
His flutt'ring ſhoulder-knot admire.
Hear and improve, he pertly cries;
I come to make a nation wiſe.
Weigh your own worth; ſupport your place,
The next in rank to human race.

In cities long I paſs'd my days,
Converſ'd with men, and learn'd their ways.
Their dreſs, their courtly manners ſee;
Reform your ſtate, and copy me.
Seek ye to thrive? in flatt'ry deal;
Your ſcorn, your hate, with that conceal.
Seem only to regard your friends,
But uſe them for your private ends.
Stint not to truth the flow of wit;
Be prompt to lie whene'er 'tis fit.
Bend all your force to ſpatter merit;
Scandal is converſation's ſpirit.
Boldly to ev'ry thing pretend,
And men your talents ſhall commend.
I knew the great. Obſerve me right;
So ſhall you grow, like man, polite.
He ſpoke, and bow'd. With mutt'ring jaws
The wond'ring circle grinn'd applauſe.
Now, warm'd with malice, envy, ſpite,
Their moſt obliging friends they bite;
And, fond to copy human ways,
Practiſe new miſchiefs all their days.
Thus the dull lad, too tall for ſchool,
With travel finiſhes the fool;
Studious of ev'ry coxcomb's airs,
He drinks, games, dreſſes, whores, and ſwears;
O'erlooks with ſcorn all virtuous arts,
For vice is fitted to his parts.

FABLE XV.

THE PHILOSOPHER AND THE PHEASANTS.

The Sage, awak'd at early day,
Thro' the deep forest took his way;
Drawn by the musick of the groves,
Along the winding gloom he roves:
From tree to tree the warbling throats
Prolong the sweet alternate notes:
But where he past he terrour threw,
The song broke short, the warblers flew;
The thrushes chatter'd with affright,
And nightingales abhorr'd his sight;
All animals before him ran,
To shun the hateful sight of man.
 Whence is this dread of ev'ry creature?
Fly they our figure or our nature?
 As thus he walk'd in musing thought,
His ear imperfect accents caught;
With cautious step he nearer drew,
By the thick shade conceal'd from view.
High on the branch a Pheasant stood,
Around her all her list'ning brood;
Proud of the blessings of her nest,
She thus a mother's care exprest.
 No dangers here shall circumvent,
Within the woods enjoy content.

Sooner the hawk or vulture truſt
Than man, of animals the worſt.
In him ingratitude you find,
A vice peculiar to the kind.
The ſheep, whoſe annual fleece is dy'd
To guard his health, and ſerve his pride,
Forc'd from his fold and native plain,
Is in the cruel ſhambles ſlain.
The ſwarms who, with induſtrious ſkill,
His hives with wax and honey fill,
In vain whole ſummer days employ'd,
Their ſtores are ſold, the race deſtroy'd.
What tribute from the gooſe is paid!
Does not her wing all ſcience aid?
Does it not lovers' hearts explain,
And drudge to raiſe the merchant's gain?
What now rewards this general uſe?
He takes the quills, and eats the gooſe.
Man then avoid, deteſt his ways,
So ſafety ſhall prolong your days.
When ſervices are thus acquitted,
Be ſure we Pheaſants muſt be ſpitted.

FABLE XVI.

THE PIN AND THE NEEDLE.

A PIN who long had ſerv'd a beauty,
Proficient in the toilet's duty,

Had form'd her sleeve, confin'd her hair,
Or giv'n her knot a smarter air,
Now nearest to her heart was plac'd,
Now in her manteau's tail disgrac'd;
But could she partial Fortune blame,
Who saw her lovers serv'd the same?
At length from all her honours cast,
Thro' various turns of life she past;
Now glitter'd on a tailor's arm,
Now kept a beggar's infant warm;
Now, rang'd within a miser's coat,
Contributes to his yearly groat;
Now, rais'd again from low approach,
She visits in the doctor's coach:
Here, there, by various fortune tost,
At last in Gresham-hall was lost.
Charm'd with the wonders of the show,
On ev'ry side, above, below,
She now of this or that inquires,
What least was understood admires.
'Tis plain, each thing so struck her mind,
Her head 's of virtuoso kind.
And pray what's this, and this, dear Sir?
A Needle, says the interpreter.
She knew the name; and thus the fool
Address'd her as a tailor's tool.
A Needle with that filthy stone,
Quite idle, all with rust o'ergrown!

You better might employ your parts,
And aid the ſempſtreſs in her arts;
But tell me how the friendſhip grew
Between that paltry flint and you.
Friend, ſays the Needle, ceaſe to blame;
I follow real worth and fame.
Know'ſt thou the loadſtone's pow'r and art,
That virtue virtues can impart?
Of all his talents I partake,
Who then can ſuch a friend forſake?
'Tis I direct the pilot's hand
To ſhun the rocks and treach'rous ſand:
By me the diſtant world is known,
And either India is our own.
Had I with milliners been bred,
What had I been? the guide of thread,
And drudg'd as vulgar Needles do,
Of no more conſequence than you.

FABLE XVII.

THE SHEPHERD'S DOG AND THE WOLF.

A WOLF, with hunger fierce and bold,
Ravag'd the plains, and thinn'd the fold;
Deep in the wood ſecure he lay,
The thefts of night regal'd the day.
In vain the ſhepherd's wakeful care
Had ſpread the toils, and watch'd the ſnare;

In vain the dog purſu'd his pace,
The fleeter robber mock'd the chaſe.
As Lightfoot rang'd the foreſt round,
By chance his foe's retreat he found.
Let us awhile the war ſuſpend,
And reaſon as from friend to friend.
A truce? replies the Wolf. 'Tis done.
The Dog the parley thus begun.
How can that ſtrong intrepid mind
Attack a weak defenceleſs kind?
Thoſe jaws ſhould prey on nobler food,
And drink the boar's and lion's blood.
Great ſouls with gen'rous pity melt,
Which coward tyrants never felt.
How harmleſs is our fleecy care!
Be brave, and let thy mercy ſpare.
Friend, ſays the Wolf, the matter weigh;
Nature deſign'd us beaſts of prey;
As ſuch, when hunger finds a treat,
'Tis neceſſary Wolves ſhould eat.
If, mindful of the bleating weal,
Thy boſom burn with real zeal,
Hence, and thy tyrant lord beſeech;
To him repeat the moving ſpeech:
A Wolf eats ſheep but now and then,
Ten thouſands are devour'd by men.
An open foe may prove a curſe,
But a pretended friend is worſe.

FABLE XXI.

THE RATCATCHER AND CATS.

The rats by night such mischief did,
Betty was ev'ry morning chid:
They undermin'd whole sides of bacon,
Her cheese was sapp'd, her tarts were taken;
Her pasties, fenc'd with thickest paste,
Were all demolish'd and laid waste:
She curs'd the Cat for want of duty,
Who left her foes a constant booty.
  An engineer, of noted skill,
Engag'd to stop the growing ill.
  From room to room he now surveys
Their haunts, their works, their secret ways;
Finds where they 'scape an ambuscade,
And whence the nightly sally's made.
  An envious Cat from place to place,
Unseen, attends his silent pace:
She saw that if his trade went on,
The purring race must be undone;
So secretly removes his baits,
And ev'ry stratagem defeats.
  Again he sets the poison'd toils,
And Puss again the labour foils.
  What foe (to frustrate my designs)
My schemes thus nightly countermines?

Incens'd, he cries, this very hour
The wretch ſhall bleed beneath my pow'r.
  So ſaid, a pond'rous trap he brought,
And in the fact poor Puſs was caught.
  Smuggler, ſays he, thou ſhalt be made
A victim to our loſs of trade.
  The captive Cat, with piteous mews,
For pardon, life, and freedom, ſues.
A ſiſter of the ſcience ſpare;
One int'reſt is our common care.
  What inſolence! the Man reply'd;
Shall Cats with us the game divide?
Were all your interloping band
Extinguiſh'd, or expell'd the land,
We Ratcatchers might raiſe our fees,
Sole Guardians of a nation's cheeſe!
  A Cat, who ſaw the lifted knife,
Thus ſpoke, and ſav'd [illegible] ſiſter's life.
  In ev'ry age and clime we ſee
Two of a trade can ne'er agree.
Each hates his neighbour for encroaching;
'Squire ſtigmatizes 'ſquire for poaching;
Beauties with beauties are in arms,
And ſcandal pelts each other's charms;
Kings, too, their neighbour kings dethrone,
In hope to make the world their own:
But let us limit our deſires,
Not war like beauties, kings, and 'ſquires;

Oh! pardon me, the artist cry'd;
In this we Painters must decide.
The piece ev'n common eyes must strike,
I warrant it extremely like.
My Lord examin'd it anew;
No looking-glass seem'd half so true.
A lady came, with borrow'd grace
He from his Venus form'd her face.
Her lover prais'd the Painter's art;
So like the picture in his heart!
To ev'ry age some charm he lent;
Ev'n beauties were almost content.
Thro' all the town his art they prais'd;
His custom grew, his price was rais'd.
Had he the real likeness shown,
Would any man the picture own?
But when thus happily he wrought,
Each found the likeness in his thought.

FABLE XIX.

THE LION AND THE CUB.

How fond are men of rule and place,
Who court it from the mean and base!
These cannot bear an equal nigh,
But from superiour merit fly:
They love the cellar's vulgar joke,
And lose their hours in ale and smoke.

There o'er ſome petty club preſide;
So poor, ſo paltry, is their pride!
Nay, ev'n with fools whole nights will ſit,
In hopes to be ſupreme in wit.
If theſe can read, to theſe I write,
To ſet their worth in trueſt light.
  A Lion-cub, of ſordid mind,
Avoided all the lion kind;
Fond of applauſe, he ſought the feaſts
Of vulgar and ignoble beaſts;
With aſſes all his time he ſpent,
Their club's perpetual preſident.
He caught their manners, looks, and airs;
An aſs in ev'ry thing but ears!
If e'er his Highneſs meant a joke,
They grinn'd applauſe before he ſpoke;
But at each word what ſhouts of praiſe!
Good Gods! how natural he brays!
  Elate with flatt'ry and conceit,
He ſeeks his royal ſire's retreat;
Forward, and fond to ſhow his parts,
His Highneſs brays; the Lion ſtarts.
  Puppy! that curs'd vociferation
Betrays thy life and converſation:
Coxcombs, an ever-noiſy race,
Are trumpets of their own diſgrace.
  Why ſo ſevere? the Cub replies;
Our ſenate always held me wiſe.

How weak is pride! returns the ſire:
All fools are vain when fools admire!
But know, what ſtupid aſſes prize,
Lions and noble beaſts deſpiſe.

FABLE XX.

THE OLD HEN AND THE COCK.

Restrain your child; you 'll ſoon believe
The text which ſays we ſprung from Eve.
As an old Hen led forth her train,
And ſeem'd to peck to ſhow the grain,
She rak'd the chaff, ſhe ſcratch'd the ground,
And glean'd the ſpacious yard around:
A giddy chick, to try her wings,
On the well's narrow margin ſprings,
And prone ſhe drops. The mother's breaſt
All day with ſorrow was poſſeſt.
A Cock ſhe met; her ſon ſhe knew;
And in her heart affection grew.
My Son, ſays ſhe, I grant your years
Have reach'd beyond a mother's cares.
I ſee you vig'rous, ſtrong, and bold;
I hear with joy your triumphs told.
'Tis not from Cocks thy fate I dread;
But let thy ever-wary tread
Avoid yon' well; that fatal place
Is ſure perdition to our race.

Print this my counsel on thy breast;
To the just gods I leave the rest.
  He thank'd her care; yet day by day
His bosom burn'd to disobey,
And ev'ry time the well he saw,
Scorn'd in his heart the foolish law:
Near and more near each day he drew,
And long'd to try the dang'rous view.
  Why was this idle charge? he cries;
Let courage female fears despise.
Or did she doubt my heart was brave,
And therefore this injunction gave?
Or does her harvest store the place,
A treasure for her younger race?
And would she thus my search prevent?
I stand resolv'd, and dare th' event.
  Thus said, he mounts the margin's round,
And pries into the depth profound.
He stretch'd his neck; and from below
With stretching neck advanc'd a foe:
With wrath his ruffled plumes he rears,
The foe with ruffled plumes appears:
Threat answer'd threat; his fury grew;
Headlong to meet the war he flew;
But when the wat'ry death he found,
He thus lamented as he drown'd:
  I ne'er had been in this condition,
But for my mother's prohibition.

FABLE XVIII.

THE PAINTER WHO PLEASED NOBODY AND EVERY BODY.

Lest men ſuſpect your tale untrue,
Keep probability in view,
The trav'ller leaping o'er thoſe bounds,
The credit of his book confounds.
Who with his tongue hath armies routed,
Makes ev'n his real courage doubted.
But flatt'ry never ſeems abſurd;
The flatter'd always take your word:
Impoſſibilities ſeem juſt;
They take the ſtrongeſt praiſe on truſt.
Hyperboles, tho' ne'er ſo great,
Will ſtill come ſhort of ſelf-conceit.
  So very like a Painter drew,
That ev'ry eye the picture knew;
He hit complexion, feature, air,
So juſt, the life itſelf was there.
No flatt'ry with his colours laid,
To bloom reſtor'd the faded maid;
He gave each muſcle all its ſtrength;
The mouth, the chin, the noſe's length;
His honeſt pencil touch'd with truth,
And mark'd the date of age and youth.

He loſt his friends, his practice fail'd;
Truth ſhould not always be reveal'd:
In duſty piles his pictures lay,
For no one ſent the ſecond pay.
Two buſtos, fraught with ev'ry grace,
A Venus' and Apollo's face,
He plac'd in view; reſolv'd to pleaſe,
Whoever ſat he drew from theſe,
From theſe corrected ev'ry feature,
And ſpirited each awkward creature.
All things were ſet; the hour was come,
His pallette ready o'er his thumb;
My Lord appear'd; and, ſeated right,
In proper attitude and light,
The Painter look'd, he ſketch'd the piece,
Then dipp'd his pencil, talk'd of Greece,
Of Titian's tints, of Guido's air;
Thoſe eyes, my Lord, the ſpirit there
Might well a Raphael's hand require,
To give them all the native fire;
The features, fraught with ſenſe and wit,
You'll grant, are very hard to hit;
But yet with patience you ſhall view
As much as paint and art can do.
Obſerve the work. My Lord reply'd,
Till now I thought my mouth was wide;
Beſides, my noſe is ſomewhat long;
Dear Sir, for me, 'tis far too young.

For tho' we both one prey pursue,
There's game enough for us and you.

FABLE XXII.

THE GOAT WITHOUT A BEARD.

'Tis certain that the modish passions
Descend among the crowd like fashions.
Excuse me, then, if pride, conceit,
(The manners of the fair and great)
I give to monkeys, asses, dogs,
Fleas, owls, goats, butterflies, and hogs.
I say that these are proud: what then?
I never said they equal men.
A Goat (as vain as Goat can be)
Affected singularity:
Whene'er a thymy bank he found,
He roll'd upon the fragrant ground,
And then with fond attention stood,
Fix'd o'er his image in the flood.
I hate my frowzy beard, he cries,
My youth is lost in this disguise.
Did not the females know my vigour,
Well might they loathe this rev'rend figure.
Resolv'd to smooth his shaggy face,
He sought the barber of the place.
A flippant monkey, spruce and smart,
Hard by, profess'd the dapper art;

His pole with pewter basons hung,
Black rotten teeth in order strung,
Rang'd cups, that in the window stood,
Lin'd with red rags, to look like blood,
Did well his threefold trade explain,
Who shav'd, drew teeth, and breath'd a vein.
The Goat he welcomes with an air,
And seats him in his wooden chair:
Mouth, nose, and cheek, the lather hides;
Light, smooth, and swift, the razor glides.
I hope your custom, Sir, says Pug,
Sure never face was half so smug!
The Goat, impatient for applause,
Swift to the neighb'ring hill withdraws;
The shaggy people grinn'd and star'd.
Heigh day! what 's here? without a beard!
Say, Brother, whence the dire disgrace?
What envious hand hath robb'd your face?
When thus the fop with smiles of scorn:
Are beards by civil nations worn?
Ev'n Muscovites have mow'd their chins.
Shall we, like formal Capuchins,
Stubborn in pride, retain the mode,
And bear about the hairy load?
Whene'er we thro' the village stray,
Are we not mock'd along the way,
Insulted with loud shouts of scorn,
By boys our beards disgrac'd and torn?

Were you no more with Goats to dwell,
Brother, I grant you reaſon well,
Replies a bearded chief. Beſide,
If boys can mortify thy pride,
How wilt thou ſtand the ridicule
Of our whole flock? Affected fool!
Coxcombs, diſtinguiſh'd from the reſt,
To all but coxcombs are a jeſt.

FABLE XXIII.

THE OLD WOMAN AND HER CATS.

Who friendſhip with a knave hath made,
Is judg'd a partner in the trade.
The matron who conducts abroad
A willing nymph, is thought a bawd;
And if a modeſt girl is ſeen
With one who cures a lover's ſpleen,
We gueſs her not extremely nice,
And only wiſh to know her price.
'Tis thus that on the choice of friends
Our good or evil name depends.
A wrinkled hag, of wicked fame,
Beſide a little ſmoky flame
Sate hov'ring, pinch'd with age and froſt;
Her ſhrivell'd hands, with veins emboſs'd,
Upon her knees her weight ſuſtains,
While palſy ſhook her crazy brains:

She mumbles forth her backward pray'rs,
An untam'd ſcold of fourſcore years.
About her ſwarm'd a num'rous brood
Of Cats, who lank with hunger mew'd.
Teas'd with their cries, her choler grew,
And thus ſhe ſputter'd. Hence, ye crew!
Fool that I was, to entertain
Such imps, ſuch fiends, a helliſh train!
Had ye been never hous'd and nurs'd,
I for a witch had ne'er been curs'd.
To you I owe that crowds of boys
Worry me with eternal noiſe;
Straws laid acroſs my pace retard,
The horſeſhoe's nail'd (each threſhold's guard)
The ſtunted broom the wenches hide,
For fear that I ſhould up and ride;
They ſtick with pins my bleeding ſeat,
And bid me ſhow my ſecret teat.
To hear you prate would vex a ſaint;
Who hath moſt reaſon of complaint?
Replies a Cat. Let's come to proof.
Had we ne'er ſtarv'd beneath your roof,
We had, like others of our race,
In credit liv'd as beaſts of chaſe.
'Tis infamy to ſerve a hag;
Cats are thought imps, her broom a nag;
And boys againſt our lives combine,
Becauſe 'tis ſaid your Cats have nine.

FABLE XXIV.

THE BUTTERFLY AND THE SNAIL.

All upstarts, insolent in place,
Remind us of their vulgar race.
As in the sunshine of the morn
A Butterfly (but newly born)
Sate proudly perking on a rose,
With pert conceit his bosom glows;
His wings (all glorious to behold)
Bedropt with azure, jet, and gold,
Wide he displays; the spangled dew
Reflects his eyes and various hue.
His now-forgotten friend, a Snail,
Beneath his house, with slimy trail
Crawls o'er the grass, whom when he spies,
In wrath he to the gard'ner cries,
What means yon' peasant's daily toil,
From choking weeds to rid the soil?
Why wake you to the morning's care?
Why with new arts correct the year?
Why grows the peach with crimson hue?
And why the plum's inviting blue?
Were they to feast his taste design'd,
That vermine of voracious kind?
Crush then the slow, the pilf'ring race,
So purge thy garden from disgrace.

What arrogance! the Snail reply'd;
How inſolent is upſtart pride!
Hadſt thou not thus, with inſult vain,
Provok'd my patience to complain,
I had conceal'd thy meaner birth,
Nor trac'd thee to the ſcum of earth:
For ſcarce nine ſuns have wak'd the hours,
To ſwell the fruit, and paint the flow'rs,
Since I thy humbler life ſurvey'd,
In baſe, in ſordid guiſe array'd;
A hideous inſect, vile, unclean,
You dragg'd a ſlow and noiſome train;
And from your ſpider-bowels drew
Foul film, and ſpun the dirty clue.
I own my humble life, good Friend;
Snail was I born, and Snail ſhall end.
And what's a Butterfly? at beſt
He's but a caterpillar dreſt;
And all thy race (a num'rous ſeed)
Shall prove of caterpillar breed.

FABLE XXV.

THE SCOLD AND THE PARROT.

The huſband thus reprov'd his wife:
Who deals in ſlander lives in ſtrife.
Art thou the herald of diſgrace,
Denouncing war to all thy race?

Can nothing quell thy thunder's rage,
Which ſpares nor friend, nor ſex, nor age?
That vixen tongue of your's, my Dear,
Alarms our neighbours far and near.
Good Gods! 't is like a rolling river,
That murm'ring flows, and flows for ever!
Ne'er tir'd, perpetual diſcord ſowing!
Like Fame, it gathers ſtrength by going.
Heigh day! the flippant tongue replies,
How ſolemn is the fool! how wiſe!
Is Nature's choiceſt gift debarr'd?
Nay, frown not; for I will be heard.
Women of late are finely ridden,
A Parrot's privilege forbidden!
You praiſe his talk, his ſqualling ſong,
But wives are always in the wrong.
Now reputations flew in pieces
Of mothers, daughters, aunts, and nieces:
She ran the Parrot's language o'er,
Bawd, huſſy, drunkard, ſlattern, whore;
On all the ſex ſhe vents her fury,
Tries and condemns without a jury.
At once the torrent of her words
Alarm'd cat, monkey, dogs, and birds:
All join their forces to confound her,
Puſs ſpits, the monkey chatters round her;
The yelping cur her heels aſſaults;
The magpie blabs out all her faults;

Poll, in the uproar, from his cage,
With this rebuke outſcream'd her rage.
A Parrot is for talking priz'd,
But prattling women are deſpis'd.
She who attacks another's honour
Draws ev'ry living thing upon her.
Think, Madam, when you ſtretch your lungs,
That all your neighbours too have tongues:
One ſlander muſt ten thouſand get,
The world with int'reſt pays the debt.

FABLE XXVI.

THE CUR AND THE MASTIFF.

A SNEAKING Cur, the maſter's ſpy,
Rewarded for his daily lie,
With ſecret jealouſies and fears
Set all together by the ears.
Poor puſs to-day was in diſgrace,
Another cat ſupply'd her place;
The hound was beat, the maſtiff chid,
The monkey was the room forbid;
Each to his deareſt friend grew ſhy,
And none could tell the reaſon why.
A plan to rob the houſe was laid:
The thief with love ſeduc'd the maid,
Cajol'd the Cur, and ſtrok'd his head,
And bought his ſecreſy with bread:

He next the Maſtiff's honour try'd,
Whoſe honeſt jaws the bribe defy'd:
He ſtretch'd his hand to proffer more;
The ſurly Dog his fingers tore.
Swift ran the Cur; with indignation
The maſter took his information.
Hang him, the villain's curs'd, he cries;
And round his neck the halter ties.
The Dog his humble ſuit preferr'd,
And begg'd in juſtice to be heard.
The maſter ſat. On either hand
The cited Dogs confronting ſtand;
The Cur the bloody tale relates,
And, like a lawyer, aggravates.
Judge not unheard, the Maſtiff cry'd,
But weigh the cauſe of either ſide.
Think not that treach'ry can be juſt;
Take not informers' words on truſt;
They ope their hand to ev'ry pay,
And you and me by turns betray.
He ſpoke; and all the truth appear'd:
The Cur was hang'd, the Maſtiff clear'd.

FABLE XXVII.

THE SICK MAN AND THE ANGEL.

Is there no hope? the ſick man ſaid.
The ſilent doctor ſhook his head,

And took his leave with ſigns of ſorrow,
Deſpairing of his fee to-morrow.
When thus the Man, with gaſping breath;
I feel the chilling wound of Death.
Since I muſt bid the world adieu,
Let me my former life review.
I grant my bargains well were made,
But all men overreach in trade;
'Tis ſelf-defence in each profeſſion;
Sure ſelf-defence is no tranſgreſſion.
The little portion in my hands,
By good ſecurity on lands
Is well increas'd. If, unawares,
My juſtice to myſelf and heirs
Hath let my debtor rot in jail,
For want of good ſufficient bail;
If I by writ, or bond, or deed,
Reduc'd a family to need,
My will hath made the world amends;
My hope on charity depends.
When I am number'd with the dead,
And all my pious gifts are read,
By heav'n and earth 't will then be known
My charities were amply ſhown.
An Angel came. Ah! Friend! he cry'd,
No more in flatt'ring hope confide.
Can thy good deeds in former times
Outweigh the balance of thy crimes?

What widow or what orphan prays
To crown thy life with length of days?
A pious action 's in thy pow'r,
Embrace with joy the happy hour.
Now while you draw the vital air,
Prove your intention is sincere:
This instant give a hundred pound;
Your neighbours want, and you abound.
But why such haste, the sick Man whines;
Who knows as yet what Heav'n designs?
Perhaps I may recover still.
That sum and more are in my will.
Fool, says the Vision, now 't is plain
Your life, your soul, your heav'n, was gain.
From ev'ry side, with all your might,
You scrap'd, and scrap'd beyond your right;
And after death would fain atone,
By giving what is not your own.
While there is life, there 's hope, he cry'd;
Then why such haste? so groan'd and dy'd.

FABLE XXVIII.

THE PERSIAN, THE SUN, AND THE CLOUD.

Is there a bard whom genius fires,
Whose ev'ry thought the god inspires?
When Envy reads the nervous lines,
She frets, she rails, she raves, she pines;

Her hiſſing ſnakes with venom ſwell;
She calls her venal train from hell:
The ſervile fiends her nod obey;
And all Curl's authors are in pay.
Fame calls up Calumny and Spite:
Thus ſhadow owes its birth to light.
  As proſtrate to the God of Day,
With heart devout, a Perſian lay,
His invocation thus begun:
  Parent of light! all-ſeeing Sun!
Prolifick beam, whoſe rays diſpenſe
The various gifts of Providence,
Accept our praiſe, our daily pray'r,
Smile on our fields, and bleſs the year.
  A Cloud, who mock'd his grateful tongue,
The day with ſudden darkneſs hung;
With pride and envy ſwell'd, aloud
A voice thus thunder'd from the Cloud.
  Weak is this gaudy god of thine,
Whom I at will forbid to ſhine.
Shall I nor vows nor incenſe know?
Where praiſe is due the praiſe beſtow.
  With fervent zeal the Perſian mov'd,
Thus the proud Calumny reprov'd.
It was that God who claims my pray'r
Who gave thee birth, and rais'd thee there:
When o'er his beams the veil is thrown,
Thy ſubſtance is but plainer ſhown:

A passing gale, a puff of wind,
Dispels thy thickest troops combin'd.
The gale arose; the vapour tost
(The sport of winds) in air was lost;
The glorious orb the day refines.
Thus envy breaks, thus merit shines.

FABLE XXIX.

THE FOX AT THE POINT OF DEATH.

A FOX, in life's extreme decay,
Weak, sick, and faint, expiring lay;
All appetite had left his maw,
And Age disarm'd his mumbling jaw.
His num'rous race around him stand,
To learn their dying sire's command:
He rais'd his head with whining moan,
And thus was heard the feeble tone.
Ah! Sons! from evil ways depart;
My crimes lie heavy on my heart.
See, see, the murder'd geese appear!
Why are those bleeding turkeys there?
Why all around this cackling train,
Who haunt my ears for chicken slain?
The hungry foxes round them star'd,
And for the promis'd feast prepar'd.
Where, Sir, is all this dainty cheer?
Nor turkey, goose, nor hen, is here.

These are the phantoms of your brain,
And your sons lick their lips in vain.
O Gluttons! says the drooping sire,
Restrain inordinate desire.
Your liq'rish taste you shall deplore,
When peace of conscience is no more.
Does not the hound betray our pace,
And gins and guns destroy our race?
Thieves dread the searching eye of pow'r,
And never feel the quiet hour.
Old age (which few of us shall know)
Now puts a period to my wo.
Would you true happiness attain,
Let honesty your passions rein;
So live in credit and esteem,
And the good name you lost redeem.
The counsel's good, a Fox replies,
Could we perform what you advise.
Think what our ancestors have done;
A line of thieves from son to son:
To us descends the long disgrace,
And infamy hath mark'd our race.
Tho' we, like harmless sheep, should feed,
Honest in thought, in word, and deed,
Whatever henroost is decreast,
We shall be thought to share the feast.
The change shall never be believ'd,
A lost good name is ne'er retriev'd.

Nay, then, replies the feeble Fox,
(But, hark! I hear a hen that clocks)
Go, but be mod'rate in your food;
A chicken, too, might do me good.

FABLE XXX.

THE SETTING-DOG AND THE PARTRIDGE.

The ranging Dog the ſtubble tries,
And ſearches ev'ry breeze that flies;
The ſcent grows warm; with cautious fear
He creeps, and points the covey near;
The men, in ſilence, far behind,
Conſcious of game, the net unbind.
A Partridge, with experience wiſe,
The fraudful preparation ſpies:
She mocks their toils, alarms her brood,
The covey ſprings, and ſeeks the wood;
But ere her certain wing ſhe tries,
Thus to the creeping Spaniel cries:
Thou fawning ſlave to man's deceit,
Thou pimp of lux'ry, ſneaking cheat,
Of thy whole ſpecies thou diſgrace,
Dogs ſhould diſown thee of their race!
For if I judge their native parts,
They're born with honeſt open hearts;
And, ere they ſerv'd man's wicked ends,
Were gen'rous foes, or real friends.

When thus the Dog, with ſcornful ſmile:
Secure of wing, thou dar'ſt revile.
Clowns are to poliſh'd manners blind;
How ign'rant is the ruſtick mind!
My worth ſagacious courtiers ſee,
And to preferment riſe like me.
The thriving pimp who beauty ſets,
Hath oft' enhanc'd a nation's debts:
Friend ſets his friend, without regard,
And miniſters his ſkill reward:
Thus train'd by man I learnt his ways,
And growing favour feaſts my days.
I might have gueſs'd, the Partridge ſaid,
The place where you were train'd and fed;
Servants are apt, and in a trice
Ape to a hair their maſters' vice.
You came from court, you ſay. Adieu,
She ſaid, and to the covey flew.

FABLE XXXI.

THE UNIVERSAL APPARITION.

A RAKE, by ev'ry paſſion rul'd,
With ev'ry vice his youth had cool'd;
Diſeaſe his tainted blood aſſails;
His ſpirits droop, his vigour fails;
With ſecret ills at home he pines,
And, like infirm old age, declines.

As, twing'd with pain, he pensive sits,
And raves, and prays, and swears, by fits,
A ghastly phantom, lean and wan,
Before him rose, and thus began:
My name, perhaps, hath reach'd your ear;
Attend, and be advis'd by Care.
Nor love, nor honour, wealth, nor pow'r,
Can give the heart a cheerful hour
When health is lost. Be timely wise:
With health all taste of pleasure flies.
Thus said, the Phantom disappears.
The wary counsel wak'd his fears:
He now from all excess abstains,
With physick purifies his veins;
And, to procure a sober life,
Resolves to venture on a wife.
But now again the Sprite ascends,
Where'er he walks his ear attends;
Insinuates that beauty 's frail,
That perseverance must prevail;
With jealousies his brain inflames,
And whispers all her lovers' names.
In other hours she represents
His household charge, his annual rents,
Increasing debts, perplexing duns,
And nothing for his younger sons.
Straight all his thought to gain he turns,
And with the thirst of lucre burns.

But when possess'd of Fortune's store,
The Spectre haunts him more and more;
Sets want and misery in view,
Bold thieves, and all the murd'ring crew;
Alarms him with eternal frights,
Infests his dream, or wakes his nights.
How shall he chase this hideous guest?
Pow'r may perhaps protect his rest.
To pow'r he rose. Again the Sprite
Besets him morning, noon, and night;
Talks of Ambition's tott'ring seat,
How Envy persecutes the great,
Of rival hate, of treach'rous friends,
And what disgrace his fall attends.
The court he quits to fly from Care,
And seeks the peace of rural air:
His groves, his fields, amus'd his hours;
He prun'd his trees, he rais'd his flow'rs.
But Care again his steps pursues,
Warns him of blasts, of blighting dews,
Of plund'ring insects, snails, and rains,
And droughts that starv'd the labour'd plains.
Abroad, at home, the Spectre's there;
In vain we seek to fly from Care.
At length he thus the Ghost addrest:
Since thou must be my constant guest,
Be kind, and follow me no more;
For Care, by right, should go before.

FABLE XXXII.

THE TWO OWLS AND THE SPARROW.

Two formal Owls together ſat,
Conferring thus in ſolemn chat.
  How is the modern taſte decay'd!
Where's the reſpect to wiſdom paid?
Our worth the Grecian ſages knew;
They gave our ſires the honour due;
They weigh'd the dignity of fowls,
And pry'd into the depth of owls.
Athens, the ſeat of learned fame,
With gen'ral voice rever'd our name;
On merit title was conferr'd,
And all ador'd th' Athenian bird.
  Brother, you reaſon well, replies
The ſolemn mate, with half-ſhut eyes.
Right. Athens was the ſeat of learning,
And truly wiſdom is diſcerning.
Beſides, on Pallas' helm we ſit,
The type and ornament of wit:
But now, alas! we're quite neglected,
And a pert Sparrow's more reſpected.
  A Sparrow, who was lodg'd beſide,
O'erhears them ſooth each other's pride,
And thus he nimbly vents his heat:
  Who meets a fool muſt find conceit.

I grant you were at Athens grac'd,
And on Minerva's helm were plac'd;
But ev'ry bird that wings the ſky,
Except an Owl, can tell you why.
From hence they taught their ſchools to know
How falſe we judge by outward ſhow;
That we ſhould never looks eſteem,
Since fools as wiſe as you might ſeem.
Would ye contempt and ſcorn avoid,
Let your vain glory be deſtroy'd:
Humble your arrogance of thought,
Purſue the ways by Nature taught;
So ſhall you find delicious fare,
And grateful farmers praiſe your care;
So ſhall ſleek mice your chaſe reward,
And no keen cat find more regard.

FABLE XXXIII.

THE COURTIER AND PROTEUS.

Whene'er a Courtier's out of place,
The country ſhelters his diſgrace;
Where, doom'd to exerciſe and health,
His houſe and gardens own his wealth.
He builds new ſchemes, in hope to gain
The plunder of another reign;
Like Philip's ſon, would fain be doing,
And ſighs for other realms to ruin.

As one of theſe (without his wand)
Penſive along the winding ſtrand
Employ'd the ſolitary hour,
In projects to regain his pow'r,
The waves in ſpreading circles ran,
Proteus aroſe, and thus began.
Came you from court? for in your mien
A ſelf-important air is ſeen.
He frankly own'd his friends had trick'd him,
And how he fell his party's victim.
Know, ſays the God, by matchleſs ſkill
I change to ev'ry ſhape at will;
But yet, I 'm told, at court you ſee
Thoſe who preſume to rival me.
Thus ſaid: a ſnake, with hideous trail,
Proteus extends his ſcaly mail.
Know, ſays the Man, tho' proud in place,
All Courtiers are of reptile race.
Like you, they take that dreadful form,
Bask in the ſun, and fly the ſtorm;
With malice hiſs, with envy glote,
And for convenience change their coat;
With new-got luſtre rear their head,
Tho' on a dunghill born and bred.
Sudden the god a lion ſtands;
He ſhakes his mane, he ſpurns the ſands;
Now a fierce lynx, with fiery glare,
A wolf, an aſs, a fox, a bear.

Had I ne'er liv'd at court, he cries,
Such transformation might surprise;
But there, in quest of daily game,
Each able Courtier acts the same.
Wolves, lions, lynxes, while in place,
Their friends and fellows are their chase.
They play the bear's and fox's part,
Now rob by force, now steal with art.
They sometimes in the senate bray,
Or, chang'd again to beasts of prey,
Down from the lion to the ape,
Practise the frauds of ev'ry shape.
So said: upon the god he flies,
In cords the struggling captive ties.
Now, Proteus! now (to truth compell'd)
Speak, and confess thy art excell'd.
Use strength, surprise, or what you will,
The Courtier finds evasions still;
Not to be bound by any ties,
And never forc'd to leave his lies.

FABLE XXXIV.

THE MASTIFFS.

Those who in quarrels interpose
Must often wipe a bloody nose.
A Mastiff, of true English blood,
Lov'd fighting better than his food.

When dogs were ſnarling for a bone,
He long'd to make the war his own,
And often found (when two contend)
To interpoſe obtain'd his end;
He glory'd in his limping pace;
The ſcars of honour ſeam'd his face;
In ev'ry limb a gaſh appears,
And frequent fights retrench'd his ears.
As on a time he heard from far
Two dogs engag'd in noiſy war,
Away he ſcours, and lays about him,
Reſolv'd no fray ſhould be without him.
Forth from his yard a tanner flies,
And to the bold intruder cries,
A cudgel ſhall correct your manners:
Whence ſprung this curſed hate to tanners?
While on my dog you vent your ſpite,
Sirrah! 't is me you dare not bite.
To ſee the battle thus perplex'd,
With equal rage a butcher vex'd,
Hoarſe-ſcreaming from the circled crowd,
To the curs'd Maſtiff cries aloud,
Both Hockleyhole and Marybone
The combats of my dog have known:
He ne'er, like bullies, coward-hearted,
Attacks in publick, to be parted.
Think not, raſh fool, to ſhare his fame;
Be his the honour or the ſhame.

Thus ſaid, they ſwore, and rav'd like thunder,
Then dragg'd their faſten'd dogs aſunder;
While clubs and kicks from ev'ry ſide
Rebounded from the Maſtiff's hide.
All reeking now with ſweat and blood,
Awhile the parted warriours ſtood,
Then pour'd upon the meddling foe,
Who, worry'd, howl'd, and ſprawl'd below.
He roſe; and, limping from the fray,
By both ſides mangled, ſneak'd away.

FABLE XXXV.

THE BARLEY-MOW AND THE DUNGHILL.

How many ſaucy airs we meet
From Temple-bar to Aldgate-ſtreet!
Proud rogues, who ſhar'd the South-ſea prey,
And ſprung like muſhrooms in a day!
They think it mean to condeſcend
To know a brother or a friend;
They bluſh to hear their mother's name,
And by their pride expoſe their ſhame.
As croſs his yard, at early day,
A careful farmer took his way,
He ſtopp'd, and leaning on his fork,
Obſerv'd the flail's inceſſant work.
In thought he meaſur'd all his ſtore,
His geeſe, his hogs, he number'd o'er;

In fancy weigh'd the fleeces ſhorn,
And multiply'd the next year's corn.
A Barley-mow, which ſtood beſide,
Thus to its muſing maſter cry'd;
Say, good Sir, is it fit or right
To treat me with neglect and ſlight?
Me, who contribute to your cheer,
And raiſe your mirth with ale and beer?
Why thus inſulted, thus diſgrac'd,
And that vile dunghill near me plac'd?
Are thoſe poor ſweepings of a groom,
That filthy ſight, that nauſeous fume,
Meet objects here? command it hence;
A thing ſo mean muſt give offence.
The humble dunghill thus reply'd:
Thy maſter hears, and mocks thy pride:
Inſult not thus the meek and low;
In me thy benefactor know;
My warm aſſiſtance gave thee birth,
Or thou hadſt periſh'd low in earth;
But upſtarts, to ſupport their ſtation,
Cancel at once all obligation.

FABLE XXXVI.

PYTHAGORAS AND THE COUNTRYMAN.

PYTHAG'RAS roſe at early dawn,
By ſoaring meditation drawn;

To breathe the fragrance of the day,
Thro' flow'ry fields he took his way.
In musing contemplation warm,
His steps misled him to a farm,
Where on a ladder's topmost round
A peasant stood; the hammer's sound
Shook the weak barn. Say, Friend, what care
Calls for thy honest labour there?
The Clown, with surly voice, replies,
Vengeance aloud for justice cries.
This kite, by daily rapine fed,
My hens' annoy, my turkeys' dread,
At length his forfeit life hath paid;
See on the wall his wings display'd,
Here nail'd, a terrour to his kind,
My fowls shall future safety find;
My yard the thriving poultry feed,
And my barns' refuse fat the breed.
Friend, says the Sage, the doom is wise;
For publick good the murd'rer dies:
But if these tyrants of the air
Demand a sentence so severe,
Think how the glutton, man, devours;
What bloody feasts regale his hours!
O impudence of pow'r and might,
Thus to condemn a hawk or kite,
When thou, perhaps, carniv'rous sinner,
Hadst pullets yesterday for dinner!

Hold, cry'd the Clown, with paſſion heated,
Shall kites and men alike be treated?
When Heav'n the world with creatures ſtor'd,
Man was ordain'd their ſov'reign lord.
Thus tyrants boaſt, the Sage reply'd,
Whoſe murders ſpring from pow'r and pride.
Own then this manlike kite is ſlain
Thy greater lux'ry to ſuſtain;
For "Petty rogues ſubmit to Fate,
"That great ones may enjoy their ſtate*."

FABLE XXXVII.

THE FARMER'S WIFE AND THE RAVEN.

Why are thoſe tears? why droops your head?
Is then your other huſband dead?
Or does a worſe diſgrace betide?
Hath no one ſince his death apply'd?
Alas! you know the cauſe too well;
The ſalt is ſpilt, to me it fell;
Then to contribute to my loſs,
My knife and fork were laid acroſs:
On Friday, too! the day I dread!
Would I were ſafe at home in bed!
Laſt night (I vow to Heav'n 'tis true)
Bounce from the fire a coffin flew.

* Garth's *Diſpenſary*.

Next poſt ſome fatal news ſhall tell:
God ſend my Corniſh friends be well!
Unhappy Widow, ceaſe thy tears,
Nor feel affliction in thy fears;
Let not thy ſtomach be ſuſpended;
Eat now, and weep when dinner's ended;
And when the butler clears the table,
For thy deſert I'll read my Fable.
Betwixt her ſwagging pannier's load
A Farmer's Wife to market rode,
And, jogging on, with thoughtful care
Summ'd up the profits of her ware;
When, ſtarting from her ſilver dream,
Thus far and wide was heard her ſcream.
That Raven on yon' left-hand oak
(Curſe on his ill-betiding croak)
Bodes me no good. No more ſhe ſaid,
When poor blind Ball, with ſtumbling tread
Fell prone; o'erturn'd the pannier lay,
And her maſh'd eggs beſtrow'd the way.
She, ſprawling in the yellow road,
Rail'd, ſwore, and curs'd. Thou croaking toad,
A murrain take thy whoreſon throat!
I knew misfortune in the note.
Dame, quoth the Raven, ſpare your oaths,
Unclench your fiſt, and wipe your clothes.
By why on me thoſe curſes thrown?
Goody, the fault was all your own;

For had you laid this brittle ware
On Dun, the old ſure-footed mare,
Tho' all the Ravens of the Hundred,
With croaking had your tongue out-thund'red,
Sure-footed Dun had kept her legs,
And you, good Woman, ſav'd your eggs.

FABLE XXXVIII.

THE TURKEY AND THE ANT.

In other men we faults can ſpy,
And blame the mote that dims their eye;
Each little ſpeck and blemiſh find,
To our own ſtronger errours blind.
  A Turkey, tir'd of common food,
Forſook the barn, and ſought the wood;
Behind her ran an infant train,
Collecting here and there a grain.
Draw near my birds, the mother cries,
This hill delicious fare ſupplies;
Behold the buſy negro race,
See millions blacken all the place!
Fear not; like me with freedom eat;
An Ant is moſt delightful meat.
How bleſs'd, how envy'd, were our life,
Could we but 'ſcape the poult'rer's knife!
But man, curs'd man, on Turkeys preys,
And Chriſtmas ſhortens all our days.

Sometimes with oyſters we combine,
Sometimes aſſiſt the ſav'ry chine;
From the low peaſant to the lord
The Turkey ſmokes on ev'ry board.
Sure men for gluttony are curſt,
Of the ſev'n deadly ſins the worſt.
An Ant, who climb'd beyond his reach,
Thus anſwer'd from the neighb'ring beech;
Ere you remark another's ſin,
Bid thy own conſcience look within;
Control thy more voracious bill,
Nor for a breakfaſt nations kill.

FABLE XXXIX.

THE FATHER AND JUPITER.

The Man to Jove his ſuit preferr'd;
He begg'd a wife: his pray'r was heard.
Jove wonder'd at his bold addreſſing;
For how precarious is the bleſſing!
A wife he takes: and now for heirs
Again he worries Heav'n with pray'rs.
Jove nods aſſent: two hopeful boys
And a fine girl reward his joys.
Now more ſolicitous he grew,
And ſet their future lives in view;
He ſaw that all reſpect and duty
Were paid to wealth, to pow'r, and beauty.

Once more, he cries, accept my pray'r;
Make my lov'd progeny thy care:
Let my firſt hope, my fav'rite boy,
All Fortune's richeſt gifts enjoy:
My next with ſtrong ambition fire;
May favour teach him to aſpire,
Till he the ſtep of pow'r aſcend,
And courtiers to their idol bend.
With ev'ry grace, with ev'ry charm,
My daughter's perfect features arm.
If Heav'n approve, a Father's bleſs'd.
Jove ſmiles, and grants his full requeſt.
The firſt, a miſer at the heart,
Studious of ev'ry griping art,
Heaps hoards on hoards with anxious pain,
And all his life devotes to gain.
He feels no joy, his cares increaſe,
He neither wakes nor ſleeps in peace;
In fancy'd want (a wretch complete)
He ſtarves, and yet he dares not eat.
The next to ſudden honours grew;
The thriving art of courts he knew;
He reach'd the height of pow'r and place,
Then fell the victim of diſgrace.
Beauty with early bloom ſupplies
His daughter's cheek, and points her eyes.
The vain coquette each ſuit diſdains,
And glories in her lovers' pains.

With age ſhe fades, each lover flies ;
Contemn'd, forlorn, ſhe pines and dies.
 When Jove the Father's grief ſurvey'd,
And heard him Heav'n and Fate upbraid,
Thus ſpoke the God : By outward ſhow
Men judge of happineſs and wo :
Shall ignorance of good and ill
Dare to direct th' eternal will?
Seek virtue ; and of that poſſeſt,
To Providence reſign the reſt.

FABLE XL.

THE TWO MONKEYS.

The learned, full of inward pride,
The fops of outward ſhow deride ;
The fop, with learning at defiance,
Scoffs at the pedant and the ſcience :
The Don, a formal ſolemn ſtrutter,
Deſpiſes Monſieur's airs and flutter ;
While Monſieur mocks the formal fool,
Who looks, and ſpeaks, and walks, by rule.
Britain, a medley of the twain,
As pert as France, as grave as Spain,
In fancy wiſer than the reſt,
Laughs at them both, of both the jeſt.
Is not the Poet's chiming cloſe
Cenſur'd by all the ſons of Proſe ?

While bards of quick imagination
Deſpiſe the ſleepy proſe narration.
Men laugh at apes; they men contemn;
For what are we but apes to them?
  Two Monkeys went to Southwark fair,
No criticks had a ſourer air:
They forc'd their way thro' draggled folks,
Who gap'd to catch Jack Pudding's jokes;
Then took their tickets for the ſhow,
And got by chance the foremoſt row.
To ſee their grave obſerving face
Provok'd a laugh thro' all the place.
  Brother, ſays Pug, and turn'd his head,
The rabble's monſtrouſly ill-bred.
  Now thro' the booth loud hiſſes ran,
Nor ended till the ſhow began.
The tumbler whirls the flip-flap round,
With ſomerſets he ſhakes the ground;
The cord beneath the dancer ſprings;
Aloft in air the vaulter ſwings;
Diſtorted now, now prone depends,
Now thro' his twiſted arms aſcends;
The crowd, in wonder and delight,
With clapping hands applaud the ſight.
  With ſmiles, quoth Pug, if pranks like theſe
The giant apes of reaſon pleaſe,
How would they wonder at our arts?
They muſt adore us for our parts.

High on the twig I've ſeen you cling,
Play, twiſt, and turn in airy ring:
How can thoſe clumſy things like me
Fly with a bound from tree to tree?
But yet, by this applauſe, we find
Theſe emulators of our kind
Diſcern our worth, our parts regard,
Who our mean mimicks thus reward.
Brother, the grinning mate replies,
In this I grant that man is wiſe:
While good example they purſue,
We muſt allow ſome praiſe is due;
But when they ſtrain beyond their guide,
I laugh to ſcorn the mimick pride;
For how fantaſtick is the ſight,
To meet men always bolt upright,
Becauſe we ſometimes walk on two!
I hate the imitating crew.

FABLE XLI.

THE OWL AND THE FARMER.

An Owl of grave deport and mien,
Who (like the Turk) was ſeldom ſeen,
Within a barn had choſe his ſtation,
As fit for prey and contemplation:
Upon a beam aloft he ſits,
And nods, and ſeems to think by fits.

So have I ſeen a man of news,
Or Poſtboy or Gazette peruſe,
Smoke, nod, and talk with voice profound,
And fix the fate of Europe round.
Sheaves pil'd on ſheaves hid all the floor:
At dawn of morn to view his ſtore
The Farmer came. The hooting gueſt
His ſelf-importance thus expreſt.
  Reaſon in man is mere pretence:
How weak, how ſhallow, is his ſenſe!
To treat with ſcorn the Bird of Night,
Declares his folly or his ſpite.
Then, too, how partial is his praiſe!
The lark's, the linnet's, chirping lays
To his ill-judging ears are fine,
And nightingales are all divine:
But the more knowing feather'd race
See wiſdom ſtamp'd upon my face.
Where'er to viſit light I deign,
What flocks of fowl compoſe my train!
Like ſlaves, they crowd my flight behind,
And own me of ſuperiour kind.
  The Farmer laugh'd, and thus reply'd:
Thou dull important lump of pride,
Dar'ſt thou with that harſh grating tongue
Depreciate birds of warbling ſong?
Indulge thy ſpleen: know men and fowl
Regard thee, as thou art, an Owl.

Besides, proud Blockhead! be not vain
Of what thou call'st thy slaves and train:
Few follow Wisdom or her rules;
Fools in derision follow fools.

FABLE XLII.

THE JUGGLERS.

A JUGGLER long thro' all the Town
Had rais'd his fortune and renown;
You'd think (so far his art transcends)
The devil at his fingers' ends.
  Vice heard his fame, she read his bill;
Convinc'd of his inferiour skill,
She sought his booth, and from the crowd
Defy'd the man of art aloud:
  Is this then he so fam'd for sleight?
Can this slow bungler cheat your sight?
Dares he with me dispute the prize?
I leave it to impartial eyes.
  Provok'd, the Juggler cry'd, 'Tis done;
In science I submit to none.
  Thus said, the cups and balls he play'd;
By turns this here, that there, convey'd.
The cards, obedient to his words,
Are by a fillip turn'd to birds.
His little boxes change the grain:
Trick after trick deludes the train.

He ſhakes his bag, he ſhows all fair;
His fingers ſpread, and nothing there;
Then bids it rain with ſhow'rs of gold;
And now his iv'ry eggs are told;
But when from thence the hen he draws,
Amaz'd ſpectators hum applauſe.
Vice now ſtept forth, and took the place,
With all the forms of his grimace.
This magick looking-glaſs, ſhe cries,
(There, hand it round) will charm your eyes.
Each eager eye the ſight deſir'd,
And ev'ry man himſelf admir'd.
Next, to a ſenator addreſſing,
See this bank-note; obſerve the bleſſing.
Breathe on the bill. Heigh, paſs! 'Tis gone.
Upon his lips a padlock ſhown.
A ſecond puff the magick broke;
The padlock vaniſh'd, and he ſpoke.
Twelve bottles rang'd upon the board
All full, with heady liquor ſtor'd,
By clean conveyance diſappear,
And now two bloody ſwords are there.
A purſe ſhe to a thief expos'd,
At once his ready fingers clos'd.
He opes his fiſt, the treaſure's fled;
He ſees a halter in its ſtead.
She bids Ambition hold a wand;
He graſps a hatchet in his hand.

A box of charity ſhe ſhows.
Blow here; and a church-warden blows.
'Tis vaniſh'd with conveyance neat,
And on the table ſmokes a treat.
She ſhakes the dice, the board ſhe knocks,
And from all pockets fills her box.
She next a meagre rake addreſt.
This picture ſee; her ſhape, her breaſt!
What youth, and what inviting eyes!
Hold her, and have her. With ſurpriſe,
His hand expos'd a box of pills,
And a loud laugh proclaim'd his ills.
A counter, in a miſer's hand
Grew twenty guineas at command.
She bids his heir the ſum retain,
And 'tis a counter now again.
A guinea with her touch you ſee
Take ev'ry ſhape but Charity;
And not one thing you ſaw, or drew,
But chang'd from what was firſt in view.
The Juggler now, in grief of heart,
With this ſubmiſſion own'd her art.
Can I ſuch matchleſs ſleight withſtand!
How practice hath improv'd your hand!
But now and then I cheat the throng;
You ev'ry day, and all day long.

FABLE XLIII.

THE COUNCIL OF HORSES.

Upon a time a neighing steed,
Who graz'd among a num'rous breed,
With mutiny had fir'd the train,
And spread dissension thro' the plain.
On matters that concern'd the state
The Council met in grand debate.
A Colt, whose eyeballs flam'd with ire,
Elate with strength and youthful fire,
In haste stept forth before the rest,
And thus the list'ning throng addrest.
  Good Gods! how abject is our race,
Condemn'd to slav'ry and disgrace!
Shall we our servitude retain,
Because our sires have borne the chain?
Consider, Friends! your strength and might;
'Tis conquest to assert your right.
How cumbrous is the gilded coach!
The pride of man is our reproach.
Were we design'd for daily toil,
To drag the ploughshare thro' the soil,
To sweat in harness thro' the road,
To groan beneath the carrier's load?
How feeble are the two-legg'd kind!
What force is in our nerves combin'd!

Shall then our nobler jaws ſubmit
To foam and champ the galling bit?
Shall haughty man my back beſtride?
Shall the ſharp ſpur provoke my ſide?
Forbid it Heav'ns! Reject the reign;
Your ſhame, your infamy, diſdain.
Let him the lion firſt control,
And ſtill the tiger's famiſh'd growl.
Let us, like them, our freedom claim,
And make him tremble at our name.
  A gen'ral nod approv'd the cauſe,
And all the circle neigh'd applauſe.
  When, lo! with grave and ſolemn pace,
A ſteed advanc'd before the race,
With age and long experience wiſe;
Around he caſt his thoughtful eyes,
And, to the murmurs of the train,
Thus ſpoke the Neſtor of the plain.
  When I had health and ſtrength, like you,
The toils of ſervitude I knew;
Now grateful man rewards my pains,
And gives me all theſe wide domains.
At will I crop the year's increaſe;
My latter life is reſt and peace.
I grant to man we lend our pains,
And aid him to correct the plains;
But doth not he divide the care
Thro' all the labours of the year?

How many thouſand ſtructures riſe
To fence us from inclement ſkies!
For us he bears the ſultry day,
And ſtores up all our winter's hay.
He ſows, he reaps the harveſt's gain;
We ſhare the toil and ſhare the grain.
Since ev'ry creature was decreed
To aid each other's mutual need,
Appeaſe your diſcontented mind,
And act the part by Heav'n aſſign'd.
The tumult ceas'd. The Colt ſubmitted,
And, like his anceſtors, was bitted.

FABLE XLIV.

THE HOUND AND THE HUNTSMAN.

Impertinence at firſt is borne
With heedleſs ſlight, or ſmiles of ſcorn;
Teas'd into wrath, what patience bears
The noiſy fool who perſeveres?
The morning wakes, the Huntſman ſounds,
At once ruſh forth the joyful Hounds;
They ſeek the wood with eager pace,
Thro' buſh, thro' brier, explore the chaſe:
Now ſcatter'd wide they try the plain,
And ſnuff the dewy turf in vain.
What care, what induſtry, what pains!
What univerſal ſilence reigns!

Ringwood, a dog of little fame,
Young, pert, and ignorant of game,
At once diſplays his babbling throat;
The pack, regardleſs of the note,
Purſue the ſcent; with louder ſtrain
He ſtill perſiſts to vex the train.
The Huntſman to the clamour flies,
The ſmacking laſh he ſmartly plies.
His ribs all welk'd, with howling tone
The puppy thus expreſs'd his moan.
I know the muſick of my tongue
Long ſince the pack with envy ſtung.
What will not ſpite? theſe bitter ſmarts
I owe to my ſuperiour parts.
When Puppies prate, the Huntſman cry'd,
They ſhow both ignorance and pride;
Fools may our ſcorn, not envy, raiſe,
For envy is a kind of praiſe.
Had not thy forward noiſy tongue
Proclaim'd thee always in the wrong,
Thou might'ſt have mingled with the reſt,
And ne'er thy fooliſh noſe confeſt.
But fools, to talking ever prone,
Are ſure to make their follies known.

FABLE XLV.

THE POET AND THE ROSE.

I hate the man who builds his name
On ruins of another's fame.
Thus prudes, by characters o'erthrown,
Imagine that they raise their own.
Thus scribblers, covetous of praise,
Think slander can transplant the bays.
Beauties and bards have equal pride,
With both all rivals are decry'd.
Who praises Lesbia's eyes and feature
Must call her sister awkward creature;
For the kind flatt'ry's sure to charm
When we some other nymph disarm.
As in the cool of early day
A Poet sought the sweets of May,
The garden's fragrant breath ascends,
And ev'ry stalk with odour bends:
A Rose he pluck'd, he gaz'd, admir'd,
Thus singing, as the Muse inspir'd.
"Go, Rose, my Chloe's bosom grace;
"How happy shall I prove,
"Might I supply that envy'd place
"With never-fading love!
"There, Phœnix-like, beneath her eye,
"Involv'd in fragrance, burn and die.

"Know, hapless Flow'r! that thou shalt find
"More fragrant Roses there;
"I see thy with'ring head reclin'd
"With envy and despair!
"One common fate we both must prove;
"You die with envy, I with love."
Spare your comparisons, reply'd
An angry Rose, who grew beside.
Of all mankind you should not flout us;
What can a Poet do without us!
In ev'ry lovesong Roses bloom!
We lend you colour and perfume:
Does it to Chloe's charms conduce
To found her praise on our abuse?
Must we, to flatter her, be made
To wither, envy, pine, and fade?

FABLE XLVI.

THE CUR, THE HORSE, AND THE SHEPHERD'S DOG.

The lad of all-sufficient merit
With modesty ne'er damps his spirit;
Presuming on his own deserts,
On all alike his tongue exerts:
His noisy jokes at random throws,
And pertly spatters friends and foes.
In wit and war the bully race
Contribute to their own disgrace:

Too late the forward youth ſhall find
That jokes are ſometimes paid in kind;
Or if they canker in the breaſt,
He makes a foe who makes a jeſt.
  A village Cur, of ſnappiſh race,
The perteſt puppy of the place,
Imagin'd that his treble throat
Was bleſt with Muſick's ſweeteſt note;
In the mid road he baſking lay,
A yelping nuiſance of the way;
For not a creature paſs'd along
But had a ſample of his ſong.
Soon as the trotting ſteed he hears,
He ſtarts, he cocks his dapper ears;
Away he ſcours, aſſaults his hoof;
Now near him ſnarls, now barks aloof;
With ſhrill impertinence attends,
Nor leaves him till the village ends.
It chanc'd, upon his evil day,
A Pad came pacing down the way;
The Cur, with never-ceaſing tongue,
Upon the paſſing trav'ller ſprung.
The Horſe, from ſcorn provok'd to ire,
Flung backward; rolling in the mire,
The Puppy howl'd, and bleeding lay;
The Pad in peace purſu'd his way.
  A Shepherd's Dog, who ſaw the deed,
Deteſting the vexatious breed,

Beſpoke him thus: When coxcombs prate,
They kindle wrath, contempt, or hate;
Thy teaſing tongue had judgment ty'd,
Thou hadſt not like a puppy dy'd.

FABLE XLVII.

THE COURT OF DEATH.

Death, on a ſolemn night of ſtate,
In all his pomp of terrour ſate:
Th' attendants of his gloomy reign,
Diſeaſes dire, a ghaſtly train!
Crowd the vaſt court. With hollow tone
A voice thus thunder'd from the throne:
This night our miniſter we name,
Let ev'ry ſervant ſpeak his claim;
Merit ſhall bear this ebon wand.
All at the word ſtretch'd forth their hand.
Fever, with burning heat poſſeſt,
Advanc'd, and for the wand addreſt.
I to the weekly bills appeal,
Let thoſe expreſs my fervent zeal;
On ev'ry ſlight occaſion near,
With violence I perſevere.
Next Gout appears with limping pace,
Pleads how he ſhifts from place to place;
From head to foot how ſwift he flies,
And ev'ry joint and ſinew plies;

Still working when he ſeems ſuppreſt,
A moſt tenacious ſtubborn gueſt.
  A haggard Spectre from the crew
Crawls forth, and thus aſſerts his due:
'Tis I who taint the ſweeteſt joy,
And in the ſhape of Love deſtroy:
My ſhanks, ſunk eyes, and noſeleſs face,
Prove my pretenſion to the place.
  Stone urg'd his ever-growing force;
And next, Conſumption's meagre corſe,
With feeble voice that ſcarce was heard,
Broke with ſhort coughs, his ſuit preferr'd:
Let none object my ling'ring way,
I gain, like Fabius, by delay;
Fatigue and weaken ev'ry foe
By long attack, ſecure, tho' ſlow.
  Plague repreſents his rapid pow'r,
Who thinn'd a nation in an hour.
  All ſpoke their claim, and hop'd the wand.
Now expectation huſh'd the band,
When thus the Monarch from the throne.
  Merit was ever modeſt known.
What, no Phyſician ſpeak his right!
None here! but fees their toils requite.
Let then Intemp'rance take the wand,
Who fills with gold their zealous hand.
You, Fever, Gout, and all the reſt,
(Whom wary men, as foes, deteſt)

Forego your claim; no more pretend;
Intemp'rance is eſteem'd a friend;
He ſhares their mirth, their ſocial joys,
And as a courted gueſt deſtroys.
The charge on him muſt juſtly fall
Who finds employment for you all.

FABLE XLVIII.

THE GARDENER AND THE HOG.

A GARD'NER of peculiar taſte
On a young Hog his favour plac'd,
Who fed not with the common herd;
His tray was to the hall preferr'd.
He wallow'd underneath the board,
Or in his maſter's chamber ſnor'd,
Who fondly ſtrok'd him ev'ry day,
And taught him all the puppy's play.
Where'er he went, the grunting friend
Ne'er fail'd his pleaſure to attend.
  As on a time the loving pair
Walk'd forth to tend the garden's care,
The Maſter thus addreſs'd the Swine:
  My houſe, my garden, all is thine.
On turnips feaſt whene'er you pleaſe,
And riot in my beans and peaſe;
If the potatoe's taſte delights,
Or the red carrot's ſweet invites,

Indulge thy morn and ev'ning hours,
But let due care regard my flow'rs:
My tulips are my garden's pride:
What vaſt expenſe thoſe beds ſupply'd!
The Hog by chance one morning roam'd,
Where with new ale the veſſels foam'd:
He munches now the ſteaming grains,
Now with full ſwill the liquor drains.
Intoxicating fumes ariſe;
He reels, he rolls his winking eyes;
Then ſtagg'ring thro' the garden ſcours,
And treads down painted ranks of flow'rs.
With delving ſnout he turns the ſoil,
And cools his palate with the ſpoil.
The Maſter came, the ruin ſpy'd;
Villain! ſuſpend thy rage, he cry'd.
Haſt thou, thou moſt ungrateful ſot,
My charge, my only charge, forgot?
What, all my flow'rs! no more he ſaid,
But gaz'd, and ſigh'd, and hung his head.
The Hog with ſtutt'ring ſpeech returns;
Explain, Sir, why your anger burns.
See there, untouch'd, your tulips ſtrown,
For I devour'd the roots alone.
At this the Gard'ner's paſſion grows;
From oaths and threats he fell to blows:
The ſtubborn brute the blows ſuſtains,
Aſſaults his leg, and tears the veins.

Ah! fooliſh Swain! too late you find
That ſlies were for ſuch friends deſign'd!
Homeward he limps with painful pace,
Reflecting thus on paſt diſgrace;
Who cheriſhes a brutal mate,
Shall mourn the folly ſoon or late.

FABLE XLIX.

THE MAN AND THE FLEA.

Whether on earth, in air, or main,
Sure ev'ry thing alive is vain!
Does not the hawk all fowls ſurvey,
As deſtin'd only for his prey?
And do not tyrants, prouder things,
Think men were born for ſlaves to kings?
When the crab views the pearly ſtrands,
Or Tagus, bright with golden ſands,
Or crawls beſide the coral grove,
And hears the ocean roll above,
Nature is too profuſe, ſays he,
Who gave all theſe to pleaſure me!
When bord'ring pinks and roſes bloom,
And ev'ry garden breathes perfume;
When peaches glow with ſunny dyes,
Like Laura's cheek when bluſhes riſe;
When with huge figs the branches bend,
When cluſters from the vine depend,

The snail looks round on flow'r and tree,
And cries, All these were made for me!
What dignity's in human nature?
Says Man the most conceited creature,
As from a cliff he cast his eye,
And view'd the sea and arched sky.
The sun was sunk beneath the main;
The moon and all the starry train
Hung the vast vault of heav'n. The man
In contemplation thus began.
When I behold this glorious show,
And the wide wat'ry world below,
The scaly people of the main,
The beasts that range the wood or plain,
The wing'd inhabitants of air,
The day, the night, the various year,
And know all these by Heav'n design'd
As gifts to pleasure humankind,
I cannot raise my worth too high;
Of what vast consequence am I!
Not of th' importance you suppose,
Replies a Flea upon his nose:
Be humble, learn thyself to scan;
Know, pride was never made for man.
'Tis vanity that swells thy mind.
What, heav'n and earth for thee design'd!
For thee, made only for our need,
That more important Fleas might feed.

FABLE L.

THE HARE AND MANY FRIENDS.

FRIENDSHIP, like love, is but a name,
Unleſs to one you ſtint the flame.
The child, whom many fathers ſhare,
Hath ſeldom known a father's care.
'Tis thus in friendſhips; who depend
On many, rarely find a friend.
A Hare who, in a civil way,
Comply'd with ev'ry thing, like GAY,
Was known by all the beſtial train
Who haunt the wood or graze the plain;
Her care was never to offend,
And ev'ry creature was her friend.
As forth ſhe went at early dawn,
To taſte the dew-beſprinkled lawn,
Behind ſhe hears the hunter's cries,
And from the deep-mouth'd thunder flies.
She ſtarts, ſhe ſtops, ſhe pants for breath;
She hears the near advance of death;
She doubles to miſlead the hound,
And meaſures back her mazy round,
Till, fainting in the publick way,
Half-dead with fear ſhe gaſping lay.
What tranſport in her boſom grew,
When firſt the Horſe appear'd in view!

Let me, ſays ſhe, your back aſcend,
And owe my ſafety to a friend.
You know my feet betray my flight;
To friendſhip ev'ry burden's light.
The Horſe reply'd, Poor honeſt puſs,
It grieves my heart to ſee thee thus;
Be comforted, relief is near,
For all your friends are in the rear.
She next the ſtately Bull implor'd,
And thus reply'd the mighty lord;
Since ev'ry beaſt alive can tell
That I ſincerely wiſh you well,
I may, without offence, pretend
To take the freedom of a friend.
Love calls me hence; a fav'rite cow
Expects me near yon' barley-mow;
And when a lady 's in the caſe,
You know all other things give place.
To leave you thus might ſeem unkind,
But ſee, the Goat is juſt behind.
The Goat remark'd her pulſe was high,
Her languid head, her heavy eye;
My back, ſays he, may do you harm;
The Sheep 's at hand, and wool is warm.
The Sheep was feeble, and complain'd
His ſides a load of wool ſuſtain'd;
Said he was ſlow, confeſs'd his fears;
For hounds eat ſheep as well as Hares.

She now the tr Calf addrefs'd,
To fave from death a friend diftrefs'd.
Shall I, says he, of tender age,
In this importa nt care engage?
Older and abler pafs'd you by;
How ftrong are thofe! how weak am I!
Should I prefume to bear you hence,
Thofe friends of mine may take offence.
Excufe me, then! you know my heart;
But deareft friends, alas! muft part.
How fhall we all lament! Adieu;
For fee the hounds are juft in view.

The End of Part First.

FABLES.

PART SECOND.

Advertisement.

THESE Fables were finiſhed by Mr. Gay, and intended for the preſs a ſhort time before his death; when they were left, with his other papers, to the care of his noble friend and patron the Duke of Queenſberry. His Grace has accordingly permitted them to the preſs, and they are here printed from the originals in the Author's own handwriting. We hope they will pleaſe equally with his former Fables, though moſtly on ſubjects of a graver and more political turn. They will certainly ſhew him to have been (what he eſteemed the beſt character) a man of a truly honeſt heart, and a ſincere lover of his country.

FABLE I.

THE DOG AND THE FOX.

To a Lawyer.

I KNOW you Lawyers can, with eaſe,
Twiſt words and meanings as you pleaſe;
That language, by your ſkill made pliant,
Will bend to favour ev'ry client;
That 't is the fee directs the ſenſe
To make out either ſide's pretence.
When you peruſe the cleareſt caſe,
You ſee it with a double face:
For ſcepticiſm 's your profeſſion;
You hold there 's doubt in all expreſſion.
  Hence is the bar with fees ſupply'd,
Hence eloquence takes either ſide.

Your hand would have but paltry gleaning,
Could ev'ry man expreſs his meaning.
Who dares preſume to pen a deed,
Unleſs you previouſly are feed?
'Tis drawn; and, to augment the coſt,
In dull prolixity engroſt.
And now we're well ſecur'd by law,
Till the next brother find a flaw.
Read o'er a will. Was 't ever known
But you could make the will your own?
For when you read 't is with intent
To find out meanings never meant,
Since things are thus, *ſe defendendo*,
I bar fallacious *innuendo*.
Sagacious Porta's ſkill could trace
Some beaſt or bird in ev'ry face.
The head, the eye, the noſe's ſhape,
Prov'd this an owl, and that an ape,
When, in the ſketches thus deſign'd,
Reſemblance brings ſome friend to mind,
You ſhow the piece, and give the hint,
And find each feature in the print,
So monſtrous-like the portrait 's found,
All know it, and the laugh goes round.
Like him I draw from gen'ral nature;
Is 't I or you then fix the ſatire?
So, Sir, I beg you ſpare your pains
In making comments on my ſtrains.

All private slander I detest,
I judge not of my neighbour's breast:
Party and prejudice I hate;
And write no libels on the state.
Shall not my Fable censure vice,
Because a knave is over nice?
And, lest the guilty hear and dread,
Shall not the decalogue be read?
If I lash vice in gen'ral fiction,
Is't I apply, or self-conviction?
Brutes are my theme. Am I to blame,
If men in morals are the same?
I no man call or ape or ass;
'Tis his own conscience holds the glass.
Thus void of all offence I write:
Who claims the fable knows his right.
A shepherd's Dog unskill'd in sports,
Pick'd up acquaintance of all sorts;
Among the rest a Fox he knew;
By frequent chat their friendship grew.
Says Reynard, 'Tis a cruel case
That man should stigmatize our race.
No doubt, among us rogues you find,
As among dogs and humankind;
And yet (unknown to me and you)
There may be honest men and true.
Thus slander tries whate'er it can
To put us on the foot with man.

Let my own actions recommend;
No prejudice can blind a friend;
You know me free from all disguise;
My honour as my life I prize.
By talk like this, from all mistrust
The Dog was cur'd, and thought him just.
As on a time the Fox held forth
On conscience, honesty, and worth,
Sudden he stopp'd; he cock'd his ear;
Low dropt his brushy tail with fear.
Bless us! the hunters are abroad:
What 's all that clatter on the road?
Hold, says the Dog, we 're safe from harm,
'Twas nothing but a false alarm.
At yonder town 't is market-day;
Some farmer's wife is on the way;
'Tis so (I know her piebald mare)
Dame Dobbins with her poultry ware.
Reynard grew huff. Says he, This sneer
From you I little thought to hear:
Your meaning in your looks I see.
Pray what 's Dame Dobbins, Friend, to me?
Did I e'er make her poultry thinner?
Prove that I owe the dame a dinner.
Friend, quoth the Cur, I meant no harm;
Then why so captious? why so warm?
My words, in common acceptation,
Could never give this provocation.

No lamb (for ought I ever knew)
May be more innocent than you.
At this, gall'd Reynard winc'd, and swore
Such language ne'er was giv'n before.
 What 's lamb to me? this saucy hint
Shows me, base Knave, which way you squint.
If th' other night your master lost
Three lambs, am I to pay the cost?
Your vile reflections would imply
That I 'm the thief. You dog you lie.
 Thou knave, thou fool, (the Dog reply'd)
The name is just, take either side;
Thy guilt these applications speak:
Sirrah, 't is conscience makes you squeak.
 So saying, on the Fox he flies:
The self-convicted felon dies.

FABLE II.

THE VULTURE, THE SPARROW, AND OTHER BIRDS.

To a Friend in the country.

Ere I begin, I must premise
Our ministers are good and wise;
So, tho' malicious tongues apply,
Pray what care they, or what care I?
 If I am free with courts, be 't known,
I ne'er presume to mean our own.

If general morals seem to joke
On ministers, and such-like folk,
A captious fool may take offence;
What then? He knows his own pretence.
I meddle with no state-affairs,
But spare my jest to save my ears.
Our present schemes are too profound
For Machiavel himself to sound:
To censure 'em I've no pretension;
I own they're past my comprehension.

You say your brother wants a place,
('Tis many a younger brother's case)
And that he very soon intends
To ply the court, and tease his friends.
If there his merits chance to find
A patriot of an open mind,
Whose constant actions prove him just
To both a king's and people's trust;
May he, with gratitude, attend,
And owe his rise to such a friend.

You praise his parts, for bus'ness fit,
His learning, probity, and wit;
But those alone will never do,
Unless his patron have 'em too.

I've heard of times (pray God defend us,
We're not so good but he can mend us)
When wicked ministers have trod
On kings and people, law and God;

With arrogance they girt the throne,
And knew no int'rest but their own.
Then virtue, from preferment barr'd,
Gets nothing but its own reward.
A gang of petty knaves attend 'em,
With proper parts to recommend 'em.
Then if his patron burn with lust,
The first in favour 's pimp the first.
His doors are never clos'd to spies,
Who cheer his heart with double lies;
They flatter him, his foes defame,
So lull the pangs of guilt and shame.
If schemes of lucre haunt his brain,
Projectors swell his greedy train;
Vile brokers ply his private ear
With jobs of plunder for the year;
All consciences must bend and ply;
You must vote on and not know why:
Thro' thick and thin you must go on;
One scruple, and your place is gone.
  Since plagues like these have curs'd a land,
And fav'rites cannot always stand,
Good courtiers should for change be ready,
And not have principles too steady;
For should a knave engross the pow'r,
(God shield the realm from that sad hour)
He must have rogues or slavish fools;
For what 's a knave without his tools?

Wherever those a people drain,
And strut with infamy and gain,
I envy not their guilt and state,
And scorn to share the publick hate.
Let their own servile creatures rise,
By screening fraud and venting lies:
Give me, kind Heav'n, a private station *,
A mind serene for contemplation:
Title and profit I resign;
The post of honour shall be mine.
My Fable read, their merits view,
Then herd who will with such a crew.

In days of yore (my cautious rhymes
Always except the present times)
A greedy Vulture, skill'd in game,
Inur'd to guilt, unaw'd by shame,
Approach'd the throne in evil hour,
And step by step intrudes to pow'r:
When at the royal Eagle's ear,
He longs to ease the monarch's care.
The monarch grants. With pride elate,
Behold him minister of state!
Around him throng the feather'd rout;
Friends must be serv'd, and some must out:
Each thinks his own the best pretension;
This asks a place, and that a pension.

* —— When impious men bear sway,
The post of honour is a private station. ADDISON.

The Nightingale was set aside,
A forward Daw his room supply'd.
This bird (says he) for bus'ness fit,
Hath both sagacity and wit:
With all his turns, and shifts, and tricks,
He's docile, and at nothing sticks:
Then with his neighbours one so free
At all times will connive at me.
The Hawk had due distinction shown,
For parts and talents like his own.
Thousands of hireling Cocks attend him,
As blust'ring bullies to defend him.
At once the Ravens were discarded,
And Magpies with their posts rewarded.
Those fowls of omen I detest,
That pry into another's nest.
State lies must lose all good intent,
For they foresee and croak th' event.
My friends ne'er think, but talk by rote,
Speak what they're taught, and so to vote.
When rogues like these (a Sparrow cries)
To honours and employments rise,
I court no favour, ask no place,
From such preferment is disgrace.
Within my thatch'd retreat I find
(What these ne'er feel) true peace of mind.

FABLE III.

THE BABOON AND THE POULTRY.

To a Levee-hunter.

We frequently miſplace eſteem,
By judging men by what they ſeem.
To birth, wealth, pow'r, we ſhould allow
Precedence, and our loweſt bow:
In that is due diſtinction ſhown;
Eſteem is Virtue's right alone.
With partial eye we 're apt to ſee
The man of noble pedigree:
We 're prepoſſeſt my Lord inherits,
In ſome degree, his grandſire's merits;
For thoſe we find upon record,
But find him nothing but my Lord.
When we, with ſuperficial view,
Gaze on the rich, we 're dazzled too.
We know that wealth, well underſtood,
Hath frequent pow'r of doing good;
Then fancy that the thing is done,
As if the pow'r and will were one.
Thus oft' the cheated crowd adore
The thriving knaves that keep 'em poor.
The cringing train of pow'r ſurvey;
What creatures are ſo low as they!
With what obſequiouſneſs they bend!
To what vile actions condeſcend!

Their riſe is on their meanneſs built,
And flatt'ry is their ſmalleſt guilt.
What homage, rev'rence, adoration,
In ev'ry age, in ev'ry nation,
Have ſycophants to pow'r addreſs'd!
No matter who the pow'r poſſeſs'd.
Let miniſters be what they will,
You find their levees always fill:
Ev'n thoſe who have perplex'd a ſtate,
Whoſe actions claim contempt and hate,
Had wretches to applaud their ſchemes,
Tho' more abſurd than madmen's dreams.
When barb'rous Moloch was invok'd,
The blood of infants only ſmok'd!
But here (unleſs all Hiſt'ry lies)
Whole realms have been a ſacrifice.
  Look thro' all courts: 'tis pow'r we find
The gen'ral idol of mankind;
There worſhipp'd under ev'ry ſhape;
Alike the lion, fox and ape,
Are follow'd by time-ſerving ſlaves,
Rich proſtitutes and needy knaves.
  Who then ſhall glory in his poſt?
How frail his pride, how vain his boaſt!
The followers of his proſp'rous hour
Are as unſtable as his pow'r.
Pow'r, by the breath of Flatt'ry nurſt,
The more it ſwells is nearer burſt.

The bubble breaks, the gewgaw ends,
And in a dirty tear descends.
Once on a time an ancient maid,
By wishes and by time decay'd,
To cure the pangs of restless thought,
In birds and beasts amusement sought:
Dogs, parrots, apes, her hours employ'd;
With these alone she talk'd and toy'd.
A huge Baboon her fancy took,
(Almost a man in size and look)
He finger'd ev'ry thing he found,
And mimick'd all the servants round;
Then, too, his parts and ready wit
Show'd him for ev'ry business fit.
With all these talents 't was but just
That Pug should hold a place of trust;
So to her fav'rite was assign'd
The charge of all her feather'd kind.
'Twas his to tend 'em eve and morn,
And portion out their daily corn.
Behold him now, with haughty stride,
Assume a ministerial pride.
The morning rose. In hope of picking,
Swans, turkeys, peacocks, ducks, and chicken,
Fowls of all rank surround his hut,
To worship his important strut.
The minister appears. The crowd,
Now here, now there, obsequious bow'd.

This prais'd his parts, and that his face,
Th' other his dignity in place.
From bill to bill the flatt'ry ran:
He hears and bears it like a man;
For when we flatter Self-conceit,
We but his ſentiments repeat.
  If we 're too ſcrupulouſly juſt,
What profit 's in a place of truſt?
The common practice of the great
Is to ſecure a ſnug retreat.
So Pug began to turn his brain
(Like other folks in place) on gain.
  An applewoman's ſtall was near,
Well ſtock'd with fruits thro' all the year;
Here ev'ry day he cramm'd his guts,
Hence were his hoards of pears and nuts;
For 't was agreed (in way of trade)
His payments ſhould in corn be made.
  The ſtock of grain was quickly ſpent,
And no account which way it went.
Then, too, the Poultry's ſtarv'd condition
Caus'd ſpeculations of ſuſpicion.
The facts were prov'd beyond diſpute;
Pug muſt refund his hoards of fruit;
And, tho' then miniſter in chief,
Was branded as a publick thief.
Diſgrac'd, deſpis'd, confin'd to chains,
He nothing but his pride retains.

A Gooſe paſs'd by; he knew the face,
Seen ev'ry levee while in place.
What, no reſpect! no rev'rence ſhown!
How ſaucy are theſe creatures grown!
Not two days ſince (ſays he) you bow'd
The loweſt of my fawning crowd.
Proud fool, (replies the Gooſe) 't is true
Thy corn a flatt'ring levee drew;
For that I join'd the hungry train,
And ſold thee flatt'ry for thy grain.
But then, as now, conceited Ape,
We ſaw thee in thy proper ſhape.

FABLE IV.

THE ANT IN OFFICE.

To a Friend.

You tell me that you apprehend
My verſe may touchy folks offend.
In prudence, too, you think my rhymes
Should never ſquint at courtiers' crimes;
For tho' nor this nor that is meant,
Can we another's thoughts prevent?
You aſk me if I ever knew
Court-chaplains thus the lawn purſue?
I meddle not with gown or lawn;
Poets, I grant, to riſe muſt fawn.

They know great ears are over nice,
And never ſhock their patron's vice.
But I this hackney path deſpiſe;
'Tis my ambition not to riſe.
If I muſt proſtitute the Muſe,
The baſe conditions I refuſe.
I neither flatter nor defame,
Yet own I would bring guilt to ſhame.
If I Corruption's hand expoſe,
I make corrupted men my foes;
What then? I hate the paltry tribe:
Be virtue mine; be theirs the bribe.
I no man's property invade;
Corruption's yet no lawful trade.
Nor would it mighty ills produce,
Could I ſhame bribery out of uſe.
I know 't would cramp moſt politicians,
Were they ty'd down to theſe conditions.
'Twould ſtint their pow'r, their riches bound,
And make their parts ſeem leſs profound.
Were they deny'd their proper tools,
How could they lead their knaves and fools?
Were this the caſe, let's take a view
What dreadful miſchiefs would enſue.
Tho' it might aggrandize the ſtate,
Could private lux'ry dine on plate?
Kings might indeed their friends reward,
But miniſters find leſs regard.

Informers, ſycophants, and ſpies,
Would not augment the year's ſupplies.
Perhaps, too, take away this prop,
An annual job or two might drop.
Beſides, if penſions were deny'd,
Could *Avarice* ſupport its pride?
It might ev'n miniſters confound,
And yet the ſtate be ſafe and ſound.
 I care not tho' 'tis underſtood;
I only mean my country's good:
And (let who will my freedom blame)
I wiſh all courtiers did the ſame.
Nay, tho' ſome folks the leſs might get,
I wiſh the nation out of debt.
I put no private man's ambition
With publick good in competition:
Rather than have our laws defac'd,
I'd vote a miniſter diſgrac'd.
 I ſtrike at vice, be't where it will;
And what if great folks take it ill?
I hope corruption, brib'ry, penſion,
One may with deteſtation mention;
Think you the law (let who will take it)
Can *ſcandalum magnatum* make it?
I vent no ſlander, owe no grudge,
Nor of another's conſcience judge:
At him or him I take no aim,
Yet dare againſt all vice declaim.

Shall I not cenſure breach of truſt,
Becauſe knaves know themſelves unjuſt?
That ſteward whoſe account is clear,
Demands his honour may appear:
His actions never ſhun the light;
He is, and would be prov'd upright.
  But then you think my Fable bears
Alluſion too to ſtate affairs.
  I grant it does: and who's ſo great,
That has the privilege to cheat?
If then in any future reign
(For miniſters may thirſt for gain)
Corrupted hands defraud the nation,
I bar no reader's application.
  An Ant there was whoſe forward prate
Controll'd all matters in debate;
Whether he knew the thing or no,
His tongue eternally would go;
For he had impudence at will,
And boaſted univerſal ſkill.
Ambition was his point in view:
Thus by degrees to pow'r he grew.
Behold him now his drift attain:
He's made chief treas'rer of the grain.
  But as their ancient laws are juſt,
And puniſh breach of publick truſt,
'Tis order'd (leſt wrong application
Should ſtarve that wiſe induſtrious nation)

That all accounts be ſtated clear,
Their ſtock, and what defray'd the year;
That auditors ſhall theſe inſpect,
And publick rapine thus be check'd.
For this the ſolemn day was ſet;
The auditors in council met.
The gran'ry keeper muſt explain,
And balance his account of grain.
He brought (ſince he could not refuſe 'em)
Some ſcraps of paper to amuſe 'em.
An honeſt Piſmire, warm with zeal,
In juſtice to the publick weal,
Thus ſpoke. The nation's hoard is low;
From whence does this profuſion flow?
I know our annual funds' amount;
Why ſuch expenſe? and where's th' account?
With wonted arrogance and pride,
The Ant in office thus reply'd.
Conſider, Sirs, were ſecrets told,
How could the beſt-ſchem'd projects hold?
Should we ſtate-myſteries diſcloſe,
'Twould lay us open to our foes.
My duty and my well-known zeal
Bid me our preſent ſchemes conceal:
But, on my honour, all th' expenſe
(Tho vaſt) was for the ſwarm's defence.
They paſs'd th' account as fair and juſt,
And voted him implicit truſt.

Next year again the gran'ry drain'd,
He thus his innocence maintain'd.
Think how our present matters stand,
What dangers threat from ev'ry hand,
What hosts of turkeys stroll for food,
No farmer's wife but hath her brood.
Consider, when invasion's near,
Intelligence must cost us dear;
And, in this ticklish situation,
A secret told betrays the nation:
But, on my honour, all th' expense
(Tho' vast) was for the swarm's defence.
Again, without examination,
They thank'd his sage administration.
The year revolves. Their treasure spent,
Again in secret service went,
His honour, too, again was pledg'd,
To satisfy the charge alleg'd.
When thus with panick shame possess'd,
An auditor his friends address'd.
What are we? ministerial tools!
We little knaves are greater fools.
At last this secret is explor'd,
'Tis our corruption thins the hoard.
For ev'ry grain we touch'd, at least
A thousand his own heaps increas'd.
Then for his kin and fav'rite spies
A hundred hardly could suffice.

Thus for a paltry ſneaking bribe
We cheat ourſelves and all the tribe;
For all the magazine contains
Grows from our annual toil and pains.
They vote th' account ſhall be inſpected;
The cunning plund'rer is detected;
The fraud is ſentenc'd; and his hoard,
As due, to publick uſe reſtor'd.

FABLE V.

THE BEAR IN A BOAT.

To a Coxcomb.

THAT man muſt daily wiſer grow,
Whoſe ſearch is bent himſelf to know;
Impartially he weighs his ſcope,
And on firm reaſon founds his hope;
He tries his ſtrength before the race,
And never ſeeks his own diſgrace;
He knows the compaſs, ſail, and oar,
Or never lanches from the ſhore;
Before he builds computes the coſt,
And in no proud purſuit is loſt:
He learns the bounds of human ſenſe,
And ſafely walks within the fence.
Thus, conſcious of his own defect,
Are pride and ſelf-importance check'd.

If then, ſelf-knowledge to purſue,
Direct our life in ev'ry view,
Of all the fools that pride can boaſt
A Coxcomb claims diſtinction moſt.
Coxcombs are of all ranks and kind;
They're not to ſex or age confin'd,
Or rich, or poor, or great, or ſmall,
And vanity beſots 'em all.
By ignorance is pride increas'd:
Thoſe moſt aſſume who know the leaſt;
Their own falſe balance gives 'em weight,
But ev'ry other finds 'em light.
Not that all Coxcombs' follies ſtrike,
And draw our ridicule alike;
To diff'rent merits each pretends:
This in love-vanity tranſcends;
That ſmitten with his face and ſhape,
By dreſs diſtinguiſhes the ape;
Th' other with learning crams his ſhelf,
Knows books, and all things but himſelf.
All theſe are fools of low condition,
Compar'd with Coxcombs of ambition:
For thoſe, puff'd up with flatt'ry, dare
Aſſume a nation's various care.
They ne'er the groſſeſt praiſe miſtruſt,
Their ſycophants ſeem hardly juſt;
For theſe, in part alone, atteſt
The flatt'ry their own thoughts ſuggeſt.

In this wide ſphere a Coxcomb's ſhown
In other realms beſides his own;
The ſelf-deem'd Machiavel at large
By turns controls in ev'ry charge.
Does Commerce ſuffer in her rights?
'Tis he directs the naval flights.
What ſailor dares diſpute his ſkill?
He'll be an adm'ral when he will.
Now, meddling in the ſoldier's trade,
Troops muſt be hir'd, and levies made.
He gives ambaſſadors their cue,
His cobbled treaties to renew;
And annual taxes muſt ſuffice
The current blunders to diſguiſe.
When his crude ſchemes in air are loſt,
And millions ſcarce defray the coſt,
His arrogance (nought undiſmay'd)
Truſting in ſelf-ſufficient aid,
On other rocks miſguides the realm,
And thinks a pilot at the helm.
He ne'er ſuſpects his want of ſkill,
But blunders on from ill to ill;
And when he fails of all intent,
Blames only unforeſeen event.
Leſt you miſtake the application,
The Fable calls me to relation.
A Bear of ſhag and manners rough,
At climbing trees expert enough;

For dext'roufly, and fafe from harm,
Year after year he robb'd the fwarm.
Thus thriving on induftrious toil,
He glory'd in his pilfer'd fpoil.
This trick fo fwell'd him with conceit,
He thought no enterprife too great.
Alike in fciences and arts,
He boafted univerfal parts:
Pragmatick, bufy, buftling, bold,
His arrogance was uncontroll'd:
And thus he made his party good,
And grew dictator of the wood.
The beafts, with admiration, ftare,
And think him a prodigious bear.
Were any common booty got,
'Twas his each portion to allot:
For why? he found there might be picking,
Ev'n in the carving of a chicken.
Intruding thus, he by degrees
Claim'd too the butcher's larger fees.
And now his overweening pride
In ev'ry province will prefide.
No tafk too difficult was found:
His blund'ring nofe mifleads the hound.
In ftratagem and fubtle arts
He overrules the fox's parts.
It chanc'd as, on a certain day,
Along the bank he took his way,

A Boat, with rudder, ſail, and oar,
At anchor floated near the ſhore.
He ſtopt, and turning to his train,
Thus pertly vents his vaunting ſtrain.
  What blund'ring puppies are mankind,
In ev'ry ſcience always blind!
I mock the pedantry of ſchools:
What are their compaſſes and rules?
From me that helm ſhall conduct learn,
And man his ignorance diſcern.
  So ſaying, with audacious pride
He gains the Boat, and climbs the ſide.
The beaſts, aſtoniſh'd, line the ſtrand:
The anchor 's weigh'd; he drives from land:
The ſlack ſail ſhifts from ſide to ſide;
The Boat untrimm'd admits the tide.
Borne down, adrift, at random toſt,
His oar breaks ſhort, the rudder 's loſt.
The Bear preſuming in his ſkill,
Is here and there officious ſtill;
Till, ſtriking on the dang'rous ſands,
Aground the ſhatter'd veſſel ſtands.
  To ſee the bungler thus diſtreſt
The very fiſhes ſneer and jeſt:
Ev'n gudgeons join in ridicule,
To mortify the meddling fool;
The clam'rous watermen appear;
Threats, curſes, oaths, inſult his ear:

Seiz'd, threſh'd, and chain'd, he's dragg'd to land;
Deriſion ſhouts along the ſtrand.

FABLE VI.

THE SQUIRE AND HIS CUR.

To a Country Gentleman.

The man of pure and ſimple heart
Thro' life diſdains a double part:
He never needs the ſcreen of lies
His inward boſom to diſguiſe.
In vain malicious tongues aſſail;
Let Envy ſnarl, let Slander rail,
From Virtue's ſhield (ſecure from wound)
Their blunted venom'd ſhafts rebound.
So ſhines his light before mankind,
His actions prove his honeſt mind.
If in his country's cauſe he riſe,
Debating ſenates to adviſe,
Unbrib'd, unaw'd, he dares impart
The honeſt dictates of his heart.
No miniſterial frown he fears,
But in his virtue perſeveres.
  But would you play the politician,
Whoſe heart's averſe to intuition,
Your lips at all times, nay, your reaſon,
Muſt be controll'd by place and ſeaſon.

What ſtateſman could his pow'r ſupport,
Were lying tongues forbid the court?
Did princely ears to truth attend,
What miniſter could gain his end?
How could he raiſe his tools to place,
And how his honeſt foes diſgrace?
That politician tops his part,
Who readily can lie with art:
The man's proficient in his trade;
His pow'r is ſtrong, his fortune's made.
By that the int'reſt of the throne
Is made ſubſervient to his own:
By that have kings of old, deluded,
All their own friends for his excluded:
By that, his ſelfiſh ſchemes purſuing,
He thrives upon the publick ruin.
Antiochus*, with hardy pace,
Provok'd the dangers of the chaſe;
And, loſt from all his menial train,
Travers'd the wood and pathleſs plain.
A cottage lodg'd the royal gueſt;
The Parthian clown brought forth his beſt.
The King unknown his feaſt enjoy'd,
And various chat the hours employ'd.
From wine what ſudden friendſhip ſprings!
Frankly they talk'd of courts and kings.

* Plutarch.

We country-folks (the Clown replies)
Cou'd ope our gracious monarch's eyes.
The King, (as all our neighbours say)
Might he (God bless him!) have his way,
Is sound at heart, and means our good,
And he would do it if he cou'd.
If truth in courts were not forbid,
Nor kings nor subjects would be rid.
Were he in pow'r we need not doubt him;
But that transferr'd to those about him,
On them he throws the regal cares;
And what mind they? Their own affairs.
If such rapacious hands he trust,
The best of men may seem unjust.
From kings to cobblers 't is the same;
Bad servants wound their master's fame.
In this our neighbours all agree:
Would the King knew as much as we!
Here he stopp'd short. Repose they sought,
The Peasant slept, the Monarch thought.
The courtiers learn'd, at early dawn,
Where their lost sov'reign was withdrawn.
The guards' approach our host alarms;
With gaudy coats the cottage swarms,
The crown and purple robes they bring,
And prostrate fall before the King.
The Clown was call'd; the royal guest
By due reward his thanks exprest.

The King then, turning to the crowd,
Who fawningly before him bow'd,
Thus spoke. Since, bent on private gain,
Your counsels first misled my reign,
Taught and inform'd by you alone,
No truth the royal ear hath known,
Till here conversing: hence, ye Crew,
For now I know myself and you.
Whene'er the royal ear's engrost,
State lies but little genius cost.
The fav'rite then securely robs,
And gleans a nation by his jobs.
Franker and bolder grown in ill,
He daily poisons dares instil;
And, as his present views suggest,
Inflames or sooths the royal breast.
Thus wicked ministers oppress,
When oft' the monarch means redress.
Would kings their private subjects hear,
A minister must talk with fear;
If honesty oppos'd his views,
He dar'd not innocence accuse;
'Twould keep him in such narrow bound,
He could not right and wrong confound.
Happy were kings, could they disclose
Their real friends and real foes!
Were both themselves and subjects known,
A monarch's will might be his own.

Had he the uſe of ears and eyes,
Knaves would no more be counted wiſe.
But then a miniſter might loſe
(Hard caſe!) his own ambitious views.
When ſuch as theſe have vex'd a ſtate,
Purſu'd by univerſal hate,
Their falſe ſupport at once hath fail'd,
And perſevering truth prevail'd,
Expos'd, their train of fraud is ſeen;
Truth will at laſt remove the ſcreen.
A Country 'Squire, by whim directed,
The true ſtanch dogs of chaſe neglected.
Beneath his board no hound was fed;
His hand ne'er ſtrok'd the ſpaniel's head.
A ſnappiſh Cur, alone careſt,
By lies had baniſh'd all the reſt.
Yap had his ear; and defamation
Gave him full ſcope of converſation.
His ſycophants muſt be preferr'd;
Room muſt be made for all his herd:
Wherefore, to bring his ſchemes about,
Old faithful ſervants all muſt out.
The Cur on ev'ry creature flew,
(As other great men's puppies do)
Unleſs due court to him were ſhown,
And both their face and bus'neſs known:
No honeſt tongue an audience found;
He worry'd all the tenants round;

For why? he liv'd in conſtant fear,
Leſt truth by chance ſhould interfere.
If any ſtranger dar'd intrude,
The noiſy Cur his heels purſu'd.
Now fierce with rage, now ſtruck with dread,
At once he ſnarled, bit, and fled.
Aloof he bays, with briſtling hair,
And thus in ſecret growls his fear.
Who knows but Truth, in this diſguiſe,
May fruſtrate my beſt-guarded lies?
Should ſhe (thus maſk'd) admittance find,
That very hour my ruin's ſign'd.
  Now in his howl's continu'd ſound,
Their words were loſt, the voice was drown'd.
Ever in awe of honeſt tongues,
Thus ev'ry day he ſtrain'd his lungs.
  It happen'd, in ill-omen'd hour,
That Yap, unmindful of his pow'r,
Forſook his poſt, to love inclin'd;
A fav'rite bitch was in the wind.
By her ſeduc'd, in am'rous play,
They friſk'd the joyous hours away,
Thus by untimely love purſuing,
Like Antony he ſought his ruin.
  For now the 'Squire, unvex'd with noiſe,
An honeſt neighbour's chat enjoys.
Be free, ſays he; your mind impart;
I love a friendly open heart.

Methinks my tenants ſhun my gate;
Why ſuch a ſtranger grown of late?
Pray tell me what offence they find;
'Tis plain they're not ſo well inclin'd.
Turn off your Cur (the Farmer cries)
Who feeds your ear with daily lies.
His ſnarling inſolence offends:
'Tis he that keeps you from your friends.
Were but that ſaucy puppy checkt,
You'd find again the ſame reſpect.
Hear only him, he'll ſwear it too,
That all our hatred is to you.
But learn from us your true eſtate;
'Tis that curs'd Cur alone we hate.
The 'Squire heard Truth. Now Yap ruſh'd in;
The wide hall echoes with his din:
Yet Truth prevail'd; and, with diſgrace,
The dog was cudgell'd out of place.

FABLE VII.

THE COUNTRYMAN AND JUPITER.

To Myſelf.

Have you a friend (look round and ſpy)
So fond, ſo prepoſſeſs'd as I?
Your faults, ſo obvious to mankind,
My partial eyes could never find.

When, by the breath of Fortune blown,
Your airy castles were o'erthrown,
Have I been ever prone to blame,
Or mortify'd your hours with shame?
Was I e'er known to damp your spirit,
Or twit you with the want of merit?
'Tis not so strange that Fortune's frown
Still perseveres to keep you down.
Look round, and see what others do.
Would you be rich and honest too?
Have you (like those she rais'd to place)
Been opportunely mean and base?
Have you (as times requir'd) resign'd
Truth, honour, virtue, peace of mind?
If these are scruples, give her o'er;
Write, practise morals, and be poor.
The gifts of Fortune truly rate,
Then tell me what would mend your state.
If happiness on wealth were built,
Rich rogues might comfort find in guilt.
As grows the miser's hoarded store,
His fears, his wants, increase the more.
Think, GAY, (what ne'er may be the case)
Should Fortune take you into grace,
Would that your happiness augment?
What can she give beyond content?
Suppose yourself a wealthy heir,
With a vast annual income clear!

In all the affluence you poſſeſs,
You might not feel one care the leſs.
Might you not then (like others) find
With change of fortune change of mind?
Perhaps, profuſe beyond all rule,
You might ſtart out a glaring fool;
Your luxury might break all bounds:
Plate, table, horſes, ſtewards, hounds,
Might ſwell your debts? then, luſt of play
No regal income can defray.
Sunk is all credit, writs aſſail,
And doom your future life to jail.
Or were you dignify'd with pow'r,
Would that avert one penſive hour?
You might give avarice its ſwing,
Defraud a nation, blind a king:
Then from the hirelings in your cauſe,
Tho' daily fed with falſe applauſe,
Could it a real joy impart?
Great guilt knew never joy at heart.
Is happineſs your point in view?
(I mean th' intrinſick and the true)
She nor in camps or courts reſides,
Nor in the humble cottage hides;
Yet found alike in ev'ry ſphere;
Who finds content will find her there.
O'erſpent with toil, beneath the ſhade,
A Peaſant reſted on his ſpade.

Good Gods! he cries, 'tis hard to bear
This load of life from year to year!
Soon as the morning ſtreaks the ſkies
Induſtrious Labour bids me riſe;
With ſweat I earn my homely fare,
And ev'ry day renews my care.
Jove heard the diſcontented ſtrain,
And thus rebuk'd the murm'ring ſwain.
Speak out your wants, then, honeſt Friend:
Unjuſt complaints the gods offend,
If you repine at partial Fate,
Inſtruct me what could mend your ſtate.
Mankind in ev'ry ſtation ſee.
What wiſh you? tell me what you'd be.
So ſaid, upborne upon a cloud,
The Clown ſurvey'd the anxious crowd.
Yon' face of Care, ſays Jove, behold,
His bulky bags are fill'd with gold.
See with what joy he counts it o'er!
That ſum to-day hath ſwell'd his ſtore.
Were I that man, (the Peaſant cry'd)
What bleſſing could I aſk beſide?
Hold, ſays the God; firſt learn to know
True happineſs from outward ſhow.
This optick glaſs of intuition——
Here, take it, view his true condition.
He look'd, and ſaw the miſer's breaſt
A troubled ocean, ne'er at reſt;

Want ever ſtares him in the face,
And fear anticipates diſgrace:
With conſcious guilt he ſaw him ſtart;
Extortion gnaws his throbbing heart;
And never, or in thought or dream,
His breaſts admits one happy gleam.
May Jove, he cries, reject my pray'r,
And guard my life from guilt and care.
My ſoul abhors that wretch's fate.
O keep me in my humble ſtate!
But ſee, amidſt a gaudy crowd,
Yon' miniſter ſo gay and proud;
On him what happineſs attends,
Who thus rewards his grateful friends!
Firſt take the glaſs, the God replies;
Man views the world with partial eyes.
Good Gods! exclaims the ſtartled wight,
Defend me from this hideous ſight!
Corruption with corroſive ſmart
Lies cank'ring on his guilty heart:
I ſee him with polluted hand
Spread the contagion o'er the land.
Now Av'rice with inſatiate jaws,
Now Rapine with her harpy claws,
His boſom tears. His conſcious breaſt
Groans with a load of crimes oppreſt.
See him, mad and drunk with pow'r,
Stand tott'ring on Ambition's tow'r.

Sometimes in ſpeeches vain and proud,
His boaſts inſult the nether crowd;
Now, ſeiz'd with giddineſs and fear,
He trembles leſt his fall is near.
  Was ever wretch like this! he cries;
Such miſery in ſuch diſguiſe!
The change, O Jove! I diſavow;
Still be my lot the ſpade and plough.
  He next, confirm'd by ſpeculation,
Rejects the lawyer's occupation;
For he the ſtateſman ſeem'd in part,
And bore ſimilitude of heart.
Nor did the ſoldier's trade inflame
His hopes with thirſt of ſpoil and fame.
The miſeries of war he mourn'd;
Whole nations into deſerts turn'd.
  By theſe have laws and rights been brav'd;
By theſe was freeborn man enſlav'd:
When battles and invaſion ceaſe,
Why ſwarm they in the lands of peace?
Such change (ſays he) may I decline;
The ſithe and civil arms be mine!
  Thus, weighing life in each condition,
The Clown withdrew his raſh petition.
  When thus the God: How mortals err!
If you true happineſs prefer,
'Tis to no rank of life confin'd,
But dwells in ev'ry honeſt mind.

Be justice then your sole pursuit:
Plant virtue, and content's the fruit.
So Jove, to gratify the Clown,
Where first he found him set him down.

FABLE VIII.

THE MAN, THE CAT, THE DOG, AND THE FLY.

To my native Country.

Hail, happy land! whose fertile grounds
The liquid fence of Neptune bounds;
By bounteous Nature set apart,
The seat of Industry and Art!
O Britain! chosen port of trade,
May lux'ry ne'er thy sons invade;
May never minister (intent
His private treasures to augment)
Corrupt thy state. If jealous foes
Thy rights of commerce dare oppose,
Shall not thy fleets their rapine awe?
Who is't prescribes the ocean law?
Whenever neighb'ring states contend,
'Tis thine to be the gen'ral friend.
What is't who rules in other lands?
On trade alone thy glory stands;
That benefit is unconfin'd,
Diffusing good among mankind:

That firſt gave luſtre to thy reigns,
And ſcatter'd plenty o'er thy plains:
'Tis that alone thy wealth ſupplies,
And draws all Europe's envious eyes.
Be commerce, then, thy ſole deſign;
Keep that, and all the world is thine.
  When naval traffick ploughs the main,
Who ſhares not in the merchant's gain?
'Tis that ſupports the regal ſtate,
And makes the farmer's heart elate:
The num'rous flocks that clothe the land
Can ſcarce ſupply the loom's demand;
Prolifick culture glads the fields,
And the bare heath a harveſt yields.
  Nature expects mankind ſhould ſhare
The duties of the publick care.
Who's born for ſloth? * To ſome we find
The ploughſhare's annual toil aſſign'd:
Some at the ſounding anvil glow;
Some the ſwift-ſliding ſhuttle throw;
Some, ſtudious of the wind and tide,
From pole to pole our commerce guide:
Some (taught by induſtry) impart
With hands and feet the works of art;
While ſome, of genius more refin'd,
With head and tongue aſſiſt mankind;

* Barrow.

Each aiming at one common end,
Proves to the whole a needful friend.
Thus, born each other's uſeful aid,
By turns are obligations paid.
The monarch, when his table 's ſpread,
Is to the clown oblig'd for bread;
And when in all his glory dreſt,
Owes to the loom his royal veſt.
Do not the maſon's toil and care
Protect him from th' inclement air?
Does not the cutler's art ſupply
The ornament that guards his thigh?
All theſe, in duty to the throne,
Their common obligations own.
'Tis he (his own and people's cauſe)
Protects their properties and laws.
Thus they their honeſt toil employ,
And with content the fruits enjoy.
In ev'ry rank, or great or ſmall,
'Tis induſtry ſupports us all.
The animals, by want oppreſs'd,
To man their ſervices addreſs'd:
While each purſu'd their ſelfiſh good,
They hunger'd for precarious food:
Their hours with anxious cares were vext:
One day they fed, and ſtarv'd the next:
They ſaw that plenty, ſure and riſe,
Was found alone in ſocial life;

That mutual induſtry profeſs'd,
The various wants of man redreſs'd.
The Cat, half famiſh'd, lean and weak,
Demands the privilege to ſpeak.
Well, Puſs, (ſays Man) and what can you
To benefit the publick do?
The Cat replies. Theſe teeth, theſe claws,
With vigilance ſhall ſerve the cauſe.
The mouſe, deſtroy'd by my purſuit,
No longer ſhall your feaſts pollute;
Nor rats, from nightly ambuſcade,
With waſteful teeth your ſtores invade.
I grant, ſays Man, to gen'ral uſe
Your parts and talents may conduce;
For rats and mice purloin our grain,
And threſhers whirl the flail in vain:
Thus ſhall the Cat, a foe to ſpoil,
Protect the farmer's honeſt toil.
Then turning to the Dog, he cry'd,
Well, Sir, be next your merits try'd.
Sir, ſays the Dog, by ſelf-applauſe
We ſeem to own a friendleſs cauſe.
Aſk thoſe who know me, if diſtruſt
E'er found me treach'rous or unjuſt?
Did I e'er faith or friendſhip break?
Aſk all thoſe creatures; let them ſpeak.
My vigilance and truſty zeal
Perhaps might ſerve the publick weal.

Might not your flocks in safety feed,
Were I to guard the fleecy breed?
Did I the nightly watches keep,
Could thieves invade you while you sleep?
  The Man replies. 'Tis just and right;
Rewards such service should requite.
So rare, in property, we find
Trust uncorrupt among mankind,
That taken in a publick view,
The first distinction is your due.
Such merits all reward transcend:
Be then my comrade and my friend.
  Addressing now the Fly: From you
What publick service can accrue?
From me! (the flutt'ring insect said)
I thought you knew me better bred.
Sir, I'm a gentleman. Is it fit
That I to industry submit?
Let mean mechanicks, to be fed
By bus'ness earn ignoble bread.
Lost in excess of daily joys,
No thought, no care, my life annoys.
At noon (the lady's matin hour)
I sip the tea's delicious flow'r.
On cates luxuriously I dine,
And drink the fragrance of the vine.
Studious of elegance and ease,
Myself alone I seek to please.

The Man his pert conceit derides,
And thus the uſeleſs coxcomb chides,
Hence, from that peach, that downy ſeat;
No idle fool deſerves to eat.
Could you have ſapp'd the bluſhing rind,
And on that pulp ambroſial din'd,
Had not ſome hand, with ſkill and toil,
To raiſe the tree prepar'd the ſoil?
Conſider, Sot, what would enſue,
Were all ſuch worthleſs things as you.
You'd ſoon be forc'd (by hunger ſtung)
To make your dirty meals on dung,
On which ſuch deſpicable need,
Unpity'd, is reduc'd to feed.
Beſides, vain ſelfiſh inſect, learn,
(If you can right and wrong diſcern)
That he who, with induſtrious zeal,
Contributes to the publick weal,
By adding to the common good,
His own hath rightly underſtood.
So ſaying, with a ſudden blow
He laid the noxious vagrant low.
Cruſh'd in his luxury and pride,
The ſpunger on the publick dy'd.

FABLE IX.

THE JACKAL, LEOPARD, AND OTHER BEASTS.

To a modern Politician.

I GRANT corruption ſways mankind;
That int'reſt, too, perverts the mind;
That bribes have blinded common ſenſe,
Foil'd reaſon, truth, and eloquence:
I grant you, too, our preſent crimes
Can equal thoſe of former times.
Againſt plain facts ſhall I engage
To vindicate our righteous age?
I know that in a modern ſiſt
Bribes in full energy ſubſiſt.
Since then theſe arguments prevail,
And itching palms are ſtill ſo frail,
Hence Politicians, you ſuggeſt,
Should drive the nail that goes the beſt;
That it ſhows parts and penetration,
To ply men with the right temptation.
  To this I humbly muſt diſſent,
Premiſing no reflection 's meant.
  Does juſtice or the client's ſenſe
Teach lawyers either ſide's defence?
The fee gives eloquence its ſpirit;
That only is the client's merit.

Does art, wit, wisdom, or address,
Obtain the prostitute's caress?
The guinea (as in other trades)
From ev'ry hand alike persuades.
Man, Scripture says, is prone to evil,
But does that vindicate the devil?
Besides, the more mankind are prone,
The less the devil's parts are shown.
Corruption's not of modern date;
It hath been try'd in ev'ry state.
Great knaves of old their pow'r have fenc'd,
By places, pensions, bribes, dispens'd;
By these they glory'd in success,
And impudently dar'd oppress;
By these despoticly they sway'd,
And slaves extoll'd the hand that paid;
Nor parts nor genius were employ'd,
By these alone were realms destroy'd.
  Now see these wretches in disgrace,
Stript of their treasures, pow'r, and place;
View 'em abandon'd and forlorn,
Expos'd to just reproach and scorn.
What now is all your pride, your boast?
Where are your slaves, your flatt'ring host?
What tongues now feed you with applause?
Where are the champions of your cause?
Now ev'n that very fawning train,
Which shar'd the gleanings of your gain,

Press foremost who shall first accuse
Your selfish jobs, your paltry views,
Your narrow schemes, your breach of trust,
And want of talents to be just.
What fools were these amidst their pow'r!
How thoughtless of their adverse hour!
What friends were made? A hireling herd,
For temporary votes preferr'd.
Was it these sycophants to get
Your bounty swell'd a nation's debt?
You're bi[illegible] [illegible]r these, like Swiss, attend;
No longer [illegible] no longer friend.
The lion is (beyond dispute)
Allow'd the most majestick brute;
His valour and his gen'rous mind
Prove him superior of his kind;
Yet to jackals (as 'tis averr'd)
Some lions have their pow'r transferr'd;
As if the parts of pimps and spies
To govern forests could suffice.
Once studious of his private good,
A proud Jackal oppress'd the wood;
To cram his own insatiate jaws,
Invaded property and laws.
The forest groans with discontent,
Fresh wrongs the gen'ral hate foment.
The spreading murmurs reach'd his ear;
His secret hours were vex'd with fear.

Night after night he weigh the case,
And feels the terrours of disg ce.
By friends (says he) I'll guard my seat,
By those malicious tongues defeat;
I'll strengthen pow'r by new allies,
And all my clam'rous foes despise.
To make the gen'rous beasts his friends,
He cringes, fawns, and condescends;
But those repuls'd his abject court,
And scorn'd oppression to support.
Friends must be had. He cann't subsist.
Bribes shall new proselytes enlist:
But these nought weigh'd in honest paws;
For bribes confess a wicked cause:
Yet think not ev'ry paw withstands
What hath prevail'd in human hands.
A tempting turnip's silver skin
Drew a base Hog thro' thick and thin:
Bought with a Stag's delicious haunch,
The mercenary Wolf was stanch:
The convert Fox grew warm and hearty,
A pullet gain'd him to the party:
The golden pippin in his fist,
A chatt'ring Monkey join'd the list.
But soon, expos'd to publick hate,
The fav'rite's fall redress'd the state.
The Leopard, vindicating right,
Had brought his secret frauds to light.

As rats, before the manfion falls,
Defert late hofpitable walls,
In fhoals the fervile creatures run,
To bow before the rifing fun.
The Hog with warmth exprefs'd his zeal,
And was for hanging thofe that fteal;
But hop'd, tho' low, the publick hoard
Might half a turnip ftill afford.
Since faving meafures were profeft,
A lamb's head was the Wolf's requeft.
The Fox fubmitted, if to touch
A gofling would be deem'd too much.
The Monkey thought his grin and chatter
Might afk a nut, or fome fuch matter.
Ye Hirelings! hence, (the Leopard cries)
Your venal confcience I defpife.
He who the publick good intends,
By bribes needs never purchafe friends.
Who acts this juft, this open part,
Is propt by ev'ry honeft heart.
Corruption now too late has fhow'd
That bribes are always ill beftow'd.
By you your bubbled mafter's taught,
Time ferving tools, not friends, are bought.

FABLE X.

THE DEGENERATE BEES.

To the Rev. Dr. Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's.

Though courts the practice disallow,
A friend at all times I'll avow.
In politicks I know 'tis wrong;
A friendship may be kept too long;
And what they call the prudent part,
Is to wear int'rest next the heart.
As the times take a different face,
Old friendships should to new give place.
I know, too, you have many foes,
That owning you is sharing those;
That ev'ry knave in ev'ry station,
Of high and low denomination,
For what you speak, and what you write,
Dread you at once, and bear you spite.
Such freedoms in your works are shown,
They cann't enjoy what's not their own.
All dunces, too, in church and state,
In frothy nonsense show their hate;
With all the petty scribbling crew,
(And those pert sots are not a few)
'Gainst you and Pope their envy spurt.
The booksellers alone are hurt.

Good Gods! by what a pow'rful race
(For blockheads may have pow'r and place)
Are ſcandals rais'd, and libels writ,
To prove your honeſty and wit!
Think with yourſelf: thoſe worthy men,
You know, have ſuffer'd by your pen;
From them you 've nothing but your due.
From hence, 't is plain, your friends are few.
Except myſelf, I know of none,
Beſides the wiſe and good alone.
To ſet the caſe in fairer light,
My Fable ſhall the reſt recite,
Which, (tho' unlike our preſent ſtate)
I for the moral's ſake relate.

A Bee of cunning, not of parts,
Luxurious, negligent of arts,
Rapacious, arrogant, and vain,
Greedy of pow'r, but more of gain,
Corruption ſow'd throughout the hive:
By petty rogues the great ones thrive.

As pow'r and wealth his views ſupply'd,
'Twas ſeen in overbearing pride.
With him loud impudence had merit;
The Bee of conſcience wanted ſpirit;
And thoſe who follow'd honour's rules
Were laugh'd to ſcorn for ſqueamiſh fools.
Wealth claim'd diſtinction, favour, grace,
And poverty alone was baſe.

He treated induſtry with ſlight,
Unleſs he found his profit by 't;
Rights, laws, and liberties give way,
To bring his ſelfiſh ſchemes in play.
The ſwarm forgot the common toil,
To ſhare the gleanings of his ſpoil.
While vulgar ſouls, of narrow parts,
Waſte life in low mechanick arts,
Let us (ſays he) to genius born,
The drudg'ry of our fathers' ſcorn.
The Waſp and drone, you muſt agree,
Live with more elegance than we.
Like gentlemen they ſport and play;
No buſ'neſs interrupts the day:
Their hours to luxury they give,
And nobly on their neighbours live.
A ſtubborn Bee, among the ſwarm,
With honeſt indignation warm,
Thus from his cell with zeal reply'd.
I ſlight thy frowns, and hate thy pride.
The laws our native rights protect;
Offending thee, I thoſe reſpect.
Shall luxury corrupt the hive,
And none againſt the torrent ſtrive?
Exert the honour of your race;
He builds his riſe on your diſgrace.
'Tis induſtry our ſtate maintains:
'Twas honeſt toil and honeſt gains

That rais'd our sires to pow'r and fame.
Be virtuous; save yourselves from shame.
Know that, in selfish ends pursuing,
You scramble for the publick ruin.
He spoke; and from his cell dismiss'd,
Was insolently scoff'd and hiss'd.
With him a friend or two resign'd,
Disdaining the degen'rate kind.
These Drones, (says he) these insects vile,
(I treat them in their proper style)
May for a time oppress the state:
They own our virtue by their hate;
By that our merits they reveal,
And recommend our publick zeal;
Disgrac'd by this corrupted crew,
We're honour'd by the virtuous few.

FABLE VI.

THE PACKHORSE AND THE CARRIER.

To a young Nobleman.

Begin, my Lord, in early youth,
To suffer, nay, encourage truth;
And blame me not for disrespect,
If I the flatt'rer's style reject;
With that, by menial tongues supply'd,
You're daily cocker'd up in pride.

The tree 's distinguish'd by the fruit.
Be virtue then your first pursuit;
Set your great ancestors in view,
Like them deserve the title too:
Like them ignoble actions scorn;
Let virtue prove you greatly born.
Tho' with less plate their sideboard shone,
Their conscience always was their own;
They ne'er at levees meanly fawn'd,
Nor was their honour yearly pawn'd;
Their hands, by no corruption stain'd,
The ministerial bribe disdain'd;
They serv'd the crown with loyal zeal,
Yet, jealous of the publick weal,
They stood the bulwark of our laws,
And wore at heart their country's cause;
By neither place or pension bought,
They spoke and voted as they thought.
Thus did your sires adorn their seat;
And such alone are truly great.
If you the paths of learning slight,
You 're but a dunce in stronger light.
In foremost rank the coward plac'd,
Is more conspicuously disgrac'd.
If you, to serve a paltry end,
To knavish jobs can condescend,
We pay you the contempt that 's due;
In that you have precedence too.

Whence had you this illuſtrious name?
From virtue and unblemiſh'd fame.
By birth the name alone deſcends;
Your honour on yourſelf depends:
Think not your coronet can hide
Aſſuming ignorance and pride.
Learning by ſtudy muſt be won;
'Twas ne'er entail'd from ſon to ſon.
Superiour worth your rank requires;
For that mankind reveres your ſires:
If you degen'rate from your race,
Their merits heighten your diſgrace.
A Carrier, ev'ry night and morn,
Would ſee his horſes eat their corn:
This ſunk the hoſtler's vails, 't is true,
But then his horſes had their due.
Were we ſo cautious in all caſes,
Small gain would riſe from greater places.
The manger now had all its meaſure;
He heard the grinding teeth with pleaſure;
When all at once confuſion rung;
They ſnorted, joſtled, bit, and flung.
A Packhorſe turn'd his head aſide,
Foaming, his eyeballs ſwell'd with pride.
Good Gods! (ſays he) how hard 's my lot!
Is then my high deſcent forgot?
Reduc'd to drudg'ry and diſgrace,
(A life unworthy of my race)

oo, bear the vile attacks
:d scrubs and vulgar hacks?
·vy Roan, that brute ill-bred,
rom the manger thrust my head!
l, who boast a noble line,
fals of these creatures dine?
'd by old Ball! so mean a foe!
honour suffers by the blow.
·market speaks my grandsire's fame,
jockeys still revere his name:
re yearly are his triumphs told,
re all his massy plates enroll'd.
ne'e'er led forth upon the plain,
ou saw him with a liv'ry train,
eturning, too, with laurels crown'd,
You heard the drums and trumpets sound.
Let it then, Sir, be understood,
Respect's my due, that have blood.
Vainglorious Fool! (the Carrier cry'd)
Respect was never paid to pride.
Know 't was thy giddy wilful heart
Reduc'd thee to this slavish part.
Did not thy headstrong youth disdain
To learn the conduct of the rein?
Thus coxcombs, blind to real merit,
In vicious frolicks fancy spirit.
What is 't to me by whom begot?
Thou restive, pert, conceited sot.

Your ſires I rev'rence; 't is their due:
But, worthleſs Fool, what 's that to you?
Aſk all the Carriers on the road,
They 'll ſay thy keeping 's ill beſtow'd.
Then vaunt no more thy noble race,
That neither mends thy ſtrength or pace.
What profits me thy boaſt of blood?
An aſs hath more intrinſick good.
By outward ſhow let 's not be cheated;
An aſs ſhould like an aſs be treated.

FABLE XII.

PAN AND FORTUNE.

To a young Heir.

Soon as your father's death was known,
(As if the eſtate had been their own)
The gameſters outwardly expreſt
The decent joy within your breaſt.
So laviſh in your praiſe they grew,
As ſpoke their certain hopes in you.
One counts your income of the year,
How much in ready money clear.
No houſe, ſays he, is more complete;
The garden 's elegant and great.
How fine the park around it lies!
The timber 's of a noble ſize.

Then count his jewels and his plate.
Besides, 't is no entail'd estate.
If cash run low, his lands in fee
Are, or for sale or mortgage, free.
Thus they, before you threw the main,
Seem to anticipate their gain.
Would you, when thieves are known abroad,
Bring forth your treasures in the road?
Would not the fool abet the stealth,
Who rashly thus expos'd his wealth?
Yet this you do, whene'er you play
Among the gentlemen of prey.
Could fools to keep their own contrive,
On what, on whom, could gamesters thrive?
Is it in charity you game,
To save your worthy gang from shame?
Unless you furnish'd daily bread,
Which way could wickedness be fed?
Could these professors of deceit
Within the law no longer cheat,
They must run bolder risks for prey,
And strip the trav'ller on the way.
Thus in your annual rents they share,
And 'scape the noose from year to year.
Consider, ere you make the bet,
That sum might cross your tailor's debt.
When you the pilf'ring rattle shake,
Is not your honour, too, at stake?

Muſt you not by mean lies evade
To-morrow's duns from ev'ry trade?
By promiſes ſo often paid,
Is yet your tailor's bill defray'd?
Muſt you not pitifully fawn
To have your butcher's writ withdrawn?
This muſt be done. In debts of play
Your honour ſuffers no delay:
And not this year's and next year's rent
The ſons of rapine can content.
"Look round, the wrecks of play behold,
Eſtates diſmember'd, mortgag'd, ſold!
Their owners now to jails confin'd,
Show equal poverty of mind.
Some, who the ſpoil of knaves were made,
Too late attempt to learn their trade.
Some, for the folly of one hour,
Become the dirty tools of pow'r,
And, with the mercenary liſt,
Upon court-charity ſubſiſt.
You'll find at laſt this maxim true,
Fools are the game which knaves purſue.
The foreſt (a whole cent'ry's ſhade)
Muſt be one waſteful ruin made;
No mercy's ſhewn to age or kind;
The general maſſacre is ſign'd.
The park, too, ſhares the dreadful fate,
For duns grow louder at the gate.

Stern clowns, obedient to the 'squire,
(What will not barb'rous hands for hire?)
With brawny arms repeat the stroke,
Fall'n are the elm and rev'rend oak.
Thro' the long wood loud axes sound,
And Echo groans with ev'ry wound.
To see the desolation spread,
Pan drops a tear and hangs his head:
His bosom now with fury burns;
Beneath his hoof the dice he spurns.
Cards, too, in peevish passion torn,
The sport of whirling winds are borne.
To snails invet'rate hate I bear,
Who spoil the verdure of the year;
The caterpillar I detest,
The blooming Spring's voracious pest;
The locust, too, whose rav'nous band
Spreads sudden famine o'er the land.
But what are these? The dice's throw
At once hath laid a forest low.
The cards are dealt, the bet is made,
And the wide park hath lost its shade.
Thus is my kingdom's pride defac'd,
And all its ancient glories waste.
All this (he cries) is Fortune's doing:
'Tis thus she meditates my ruin.
By Fortune, that false fickle jade,
More havock in one hour is made,

Than all the hungry inſect race
Combin'd can in an age deface.
  Fortune, by chance, who near him paſt,
O'erheard the vile aſperſion caſt.
  Why, Pan, (ſays ſhe) what 's all this rant?
'Tis ev'ry country-bubble's cant.
Am I the patroneſs of vice?
Is't I who cog or palm the dice?
Did I the ſhuffling art reveal,
To mark the cards, or range the deal?
In all th' employments men purſue,
I mind the leaſt what gameſters do.
There may (if computation 's juſt)
One now and then my conduct truſt.
I blame the fool, for what can I,
When ninety-nine my pow'r defy?
Theſe truſt alone their fingers' ends,
And not one ſtake on me depends.
Whene'er the gaming-board is ſet,
Two claſſes of mankind are met;
But if we count the greedy race,
The knaves fill up the greater ſpace.
'Tis a groſs error held in ſchools
That Fortune always favours fools.
In play it never bears diſpute;
That doctrine theſe fell'd oaks confute.
Then why to me ſuch rancour ſhow?
'Tis Folly, Pan, that is thy foe.

By me his late estate he won,
But he by Folly was undone.

FABLE XIII.

PLUTUS, CUPID, AND TIME.

Of all the burdens man must bear,
Time seems most galling and severe:
Beneath this grievous load oppress'd,
We daily meet some friend distress'd.
  What can one do? I rose at nine;
'Tis full six hours before we dine:
Six hours! no earthly thing to do!
Would I had doz'd in bed till two.
  A pamphlet is before him spread,
And almost half a page is read;
Tir'd with the study of the day,
The flutt'ring sheets are toss'd away.
He opes his snuff-box, hums an air,
Then yawns, and stretches in his chair.
  Not twenty, by the minute-hand!
Good Gods! says he, my watch must stand?
How muddling 'tis on books to pore!
I thought I'ad read an hour or more.
The morning, of all hours, I hate.
One can't contrive to rise too late.
  To make the minutes faster run,
Then, too, his tiresome self to shun,

To the next coffeehouse he speeds,
Takes up the news, some scraps he reads.
Saunt'ring from chair to chair he trails;
Now drinks his tea, now bites his nails.
He spies a partner of his wo;
By that afflictions lighter grow;
Each other's grievances they share,
And thus their dreadful hours compare.
Says Tom, Since all men must confess
That Time lies heavy, more or less,
Why should it be so hard to get,
Till two, a party at Piquet?
Play might relieve the lagging morn;
By cards long wintry nights are borne.
Does not Quadrille amuse the fair,
Night after night throughout the year?
Vapours and spleen forgot, at play
They cheat uncounted hours away.
My case, says Will, then must be hard,
By want of skill from play debarr'd.
Courtiers kill Time by various ways;
Dependence wears out half their days.
How happy these, whose Time ne'er stands!
Attendance takes it off their hands.
Were it not for this cursed show'r,
The Park had whil'd away an hour.
At court, without or place or view,
I daily lose an hour or two.

It fully anſwers my deſign,
When I have pick'd up friends to dine;
The tavern makes our burden light;
Wine puts our time and care to flight.
At ſix (hard caſe!) they call to pay.
Where can one go? I have the play.
From ſix till ten! unleſs in ſleep,
One cannot ſpend the hours ſo cheap.
The comedy 's no ſooner done,
But ſome aſſembly is begun;
Loit'ring from room to room I ſtray,
Converſe, but nothing hear or ſay:
Quite tir'd, from fair to fair I roam.
So ſoon! I dread the thoughts of home.
From thence, to quicken ſlow-pac'd Night,
Again my tavern friends invite:
Here, too, our early mornings paſs,
Till drowſy ſleep retard the glaſs.
  Thus they their wretched life bemoan,
And make each other's caſe their own.
  Conſider, Friends, no hour rolls on
But ſomething of your grief is gone.
Were you to ſchemes of buſ'neſs bred,
Did you the paths of learning tread,
Your hours, your days, would fly too faſt;
You'd then regret the minute paſt.
Time's fugitive and light as wind:
'Tis indolence that clogs your mind:

That load from off your ſpirits ſhake,
You'll own and grieve for your miſtake.
Awhile your thoughtleſs ſpleen ſuſpend,
Then read, and (if you can) attend.
  As Plutus, to divert his care,
Walk'd forth one morn to take the air,
Cupid o'ertook his ſtrutting pace.
Each ſtar'd upon the ſtranger's face,
Till recollection ſet 'em right,
For each knew th' other but by ſight.
After ſome complimental talk,
Time met 'em, bow'd, and join'd their walk.
Their chat on various ſubjects ran,
But moſt, what each had done for man.
Plutus aſſumes a haughty air,
Juſt like our purſeproud fellows here.
  Let kings, (ſays he) let cobblers tell,
Whoſe gifts among mankind excel.
Conſider courts; what draws their train?
Think you 'tis loyalty or gain?
That ſtateſman hath the ſtrongeſt hold
Whoſe tool of politicks is gold:
By that, in former reigns, 'tis ſaid
The knave in pow'r hath ſenates led:
By that alone he ſway'd debates,
Enrich'd himſelf, and beggar'd ſtates.
Forego your boaſt. You muſt conclude
That's moſt eſteem'd that's moſt purſu'd.

Think, too, in what a woful plight
That wretch must live whose pocket's light.
Are not his hours by want deprest ?
Penurious care corrodes his breast.
Without respect, or love, or friends,
His solitary day descends.
 You might, says Cupid, doubt my parts,
My knowledge, too, in human hearts,
Should I the pow'r of gold dispute,
Which great examples might confute.
I know when nothing else prevails,
Persuasive money seldom fails;
That beauty, too, (like other wares)
Its price, as well as conscience, bears.
Then marriage (as of late profest)
Is but a money-job at best.
Consent, compliance may be sold;
But love's beyond the price of gold.
Smugglers there are who, by retail,
Expose what they call Love to sale;
Such bargains are an arrant cheat :
You purchase flatt'ry and deceit.
Those who true love have ever try'd,
(The common cares of life supply'd)
No wants endure, no wishes make,
But ev'ry real joy partake.
All comfort on themselves depends;
They want nor pow'r, nor wealth, nor friends.

Love, then, hath ev'ry bliss in store;
'Tis friendship, and 'tis something more.
Each other ev'ry wish they give:
Not to know love is not to live.
Or love, or money, (Time reply'd)
Were men the question to decide,
Would bear the prize: on both intent,
My boon's neglected or mispent.
'Tis I who measure vital space,
And deal out years to human race.
Tho' little priz'd, and seldom sought,
Without me love and gold are nought.
How does the miser time employ?
Did I e'er see him life enjoy?
By me forsook, the hoards he won
Are scatter'd by his lavish son.
By me all useful arts are gain'd;
Wealth, learning, wisdom, is attain'd.
Who then would think (since such my pow'r)
That e'er I knew an idle hour?
So subtle and so swift I fly,
Love's not more fugitive than I.
Who hath not heard coquettes complain
Of days, months, years, mispent in vain?
For time misus'd they pine and waste,
And love's sweet pleasures never taste.
Those who direct their time aright,
If love or wealth their hopes excite,

In each purſuit fit hours employ'd,
And both by time have been enjoy'd.
How heedleſs then are mortals grown!
How little is their int'reſt known!
In ev'ry view they ought to mind me,
For when once loſt they never find me.
  He ſpoke. The gods no more conteſt,
And his ſuperiour gift confeſt,
That time (when truly underſtood)
Is the moſt precious earthly good.

FABLE XIV.

THE OWL, THE SWAN, THE COCK, THE SPIDER, THE ASS, AND THE FARMER.

To a Mother.

Conversing with your ſprightly boys,
Your eyes have ſpoke the Mother's joys.
With what delight I've heard you quote
Their ſayings in imperfect note!
  I grant, in body and in mind
Nature appears profuſely kind.
Truſt not to that. Act you your part;
Imprint juſt morals on their heart;
Impartially their talents ſcan:
Juſt education forms the man.
  Perhaps (their genius yet unknown)
Each lot of life 's already thrown;

That this shall plead, the next shall fight,
The last assert the church's right.
I censure not the fond intent;
But how precarious is th' event!
By talents misapply'd and crost,
Consider, all your sons are lost.
One day (the tale's by Martial penn'd)
A father thus address'd his friend.
To train my boy, and call forth sense,
You know I've stuck at no expense;
I've try'd him in the sev'ral arts;
(The lad, no doubt, hath latent parts)
Yet trying all, he nothing knows,
But, crab-like, rather backward goes.
Teach me what yet remains undone;
'Tis your advice shall fix my son.
Sir, says the friend, I've weigh'd the matter:
Excuse me, for I scorn to flatter:
Make him (nor think his genius checkt)
A herald or an architect.
Perhaps (as commonly 'tis known)
He heard th' advice, and took his own.
The boy wants wit; he's sent to school,
Where learning but improves the fool:
The college next must give him parts,
And cram him with the lib'ral arts.
Whether he blunders at the bar,
Or owes his infamy to war;

Or if by licenſe or degree
The ſexton ſhare the doctor's fee;
Or from the pulpit by the hour
He weekly floods of nonſenſe pour,
We find (th' intent of Nature foil'd)
A tailor or a butcher ſpoil'd.
  Thus miniſters have royal boons
Conferr'd on blockheads and buffoons:
In ſpite of nature, merit, wit,
Their friends for ev'ry poſt were fit.
  But now let ev'ry Muſe confeſs
That merit finds its due ſucceſs.
Th' examples of our days regard;
Where's virtue ſeen without reward?
Diſtinguiſh'd and in place you find
Deſert and worth of ev'ry kind.
Survey the rev'rend bench, and ſee
Religion, learning, piety:
The patron, ere he recommends,
Sees his own image in his friend's.
Is honeſty diſgrac'd and poor?
What is't to us what was before?
  We all of times corrupt have heard,
When paltry minions were preferr'd;
When all great offices, by dozens,
Were fill'd by brothers, ſons, and couſins.
What matter ignorance and pride?
The man was happily ally'd.

Provided that his clerk was good,
What tho' he nothing underſtood?
In church and ſtate the ſorry race
Grew more conſpicuous fools in place.
Such heads as then a treaty made,
Had bungled in the cobbler's trade.
Conſider, Patrons, that ſuch elves
Expoſe your folly with themſelves.
'Tis your's, as 'tis the parent's care,
To fix each genius in its ſphere.
Your partial hand can wealth diſpenſe,
But never give a blockhead ſenſe.
An Owl of magiſterial air,
Of ſolemn voice, of brow auſtere,
Aſſum'd the pride of human race,
And bore his wiſdom in his face;
Not to depreciate learned eyes,
I've ſeen a pedant look as wiſe.
Within a barn, from noiſe retir'd,
He ſcorn'd the world, himſelf admir'd;
And, like an ancient ſage, conceal'd
The follies publick life reveal'd.
Philoſophers of old, he read,
Their country's youth to ſcience bred,
Their manners form'd for ev'ry ſtation,
And deſtin'd each his occupation.
When Xenophon, by numbers brav'd,
Retreated, and a people ſav'd,

That laurel was not all his own;
The plant by Socrates was ſown.
To Ariſtotle's greater name
The Macedonian ow'd his fame.
  Th' Athenian bird, with pride replete,
Their talents equall'd in conceit,
And, copying the Socratick rule,
Set up for maſter of a ſchool.
Dogmatick jargon learnt by heart,
Trite ſentences, hard terms of art,
To vulgar ears ſeem'd ſo profound,
They fancy'd learning in the ſound.
  The ſchool had fame; the crowded place
With pupils ſwarm'd of ev'ry race.
With theſe the Swan's maternal care
Had ſent her ſcarce-fledg'd cygnet heir:
The Hen (tho' fond and loath to part)
Here lodg'd the darling of her heart:
The Spider, of mechanick kind,
Aſpir'd to ſcience more refin'd:
The Aſs learnt metaphors and tropes,
But moſt on muſick fix'd his hopes.
  The pupils, now advanc'd in age,
Were call'd to tread life's buſy ſtage;
And to the maſter 't was ſubmitted,
That each might to his part be fitted.
  The Swan (ſays he) in arms ſhall ſhine;
The ſoldier's glorious toil be thine.

The Cock ſhall mighty wealth attain:
Go, ſeek it on the ſtormy main.
The court ſhall be the Spider's ſphere:
Pow'r, fortune, ſhall reward him there.
In muſick's art the Aſs's fame
Shall emulate Corelli's name.
Each took the part that he adviſ'd,
And all were equally deſpiſ'd.
A Farmer, at his folly mov'd,
The dull preceptor thus reprov'd.
Blockhead, (ſays he) by what you've done,
One would have thought 'em each your ſon;
For parents, to their offspring blind,
Conſult nor parts nor turn of mind,
But ev'n in infancy decree
What this, what th' other ſon ſhall be.
Had you with judgment weigh'd the caſe,
Their genius thus had fix'd their place;
The ſwan had learnt the ſailor's art;
The Cock had play'd the ſoldier's part;
The ſpider in the weaver's trade
With credit had a fortune made;
But for the foal, in ev'ry claſs,
The blockhead had appear'd an Aſs.

FABLE XV.

THE COOKMAID, THE TURNSPIT, AND THE OX.

To a poor Man.

CONSIDER man in ev'ry ſphere,
Then tell me, is your lot ſevere?
'Tis murmur, diſcontent, diſtruſt,
That makes you wretched. God is juſt.
I grant that hunger muſt be fed,
That toil, too, earns thy daily bread.
What then? Thy wants are ſeen and known,
But ev'ry mortal feels his own.
We're born a reſtleſs needy crew:
Show me the happier man than you.
Adam, tho' bleſt above his kind,
For want of ſocial woman pin'd.
Eve's wants the ſubtle ſerpent ſaw,
Her fickle taſte tranſgreſs'd the law;
Thus fell our ſire, and their diſgrace
The curſe entail'd on human race.
When Philip's ſon, by glory led,
Had o'er the globe his empire ſpread;
When altars to his name were dreſs'd,
That he was man his tears confeſs'd.
The hopes of avarice are check'd;
The proud man always wants reſpect.

What various wants on pow'r attend?
Ambition never gains its end.
Who hath not heard the rich complain
Of ſurfeits and corporeal pain?
He, barr'd from ev'ry uſe of wealth,
Envies the ploughman's ſtrength and health.
Another, in a beauteous wife
Finds all the miſeries of life:
Domeſtick jars and jealous fear
Imbitter all his days with care.
This wants an heir; the line is loſt:
Why was that vain entail engroſt?
Canſt thou diſcern another's mind?
What is't you envy? Envy's blind.
Tell Envy, when ſhe would annoy,
That thouſands want what you enjoy.
The dinner muſt be diſh'd at one.
Where's this vexatious Turnſpit gone?
Unleſs the ſkulking Cur is caught,
The ſirloin's ſpoil'd, and I'm in fault.
Thus ſaid, (for ſure you'll think it fit
That I the Cookmaid's oaths omit)
With all the fury of a cook,
Her cooler kitchen Nan forſook:
The broomſtick o'er her head ſhe waves;
She ſweats, ſhe ſtamps, ſhe puffs, ſhe raves:
The ſneaking Cur before her flies;
She whiſtles, calls, fair ſpeech ſhe tries.

Theſe nought avail. Her choler burns;
The fiſt and cudgel threat by turns.
With haſty ſtride ſhe preſſes near;
He ſlinks aloof, and howls with fear.
  Was ever Cur ſo curs'd! (he cry'd)
What ſtar did at my birth preſide!
Am I for life by compact bound
To tread the wheel's eternal round?
Inglorious taſk! of all our race
No ſlave is half ſo mean and baſe.
Had Fate a kinder lot aſſign'd,
And form'd me of the lapdog kind,
I then, in higher life employ'd,
Had indolence and eaſe enjoy'd;
And, like a gentleman, careſt,
Had been the lady's fav'rite gueſt:
Or were I ſprung from ſpaniel line,
Was his ſagacious noſtril mine,
By me, their never-erring guide,
From wood and plain their feaſts ſupply'd,
Knights, ſquires, attendant on my pace,
Had ſhar'd the pleaſures of the chaſe.
Endu'd with native ſtrength and fire,
Why call'd I not the lion ſire?
A lion! ſuch mean views I ſcorn:
Why was I not of woman born?
Who dares with reaſon's pow'r contend?
On man we brutal ſlaves depend:

To him all creatures tribute pay,
And luxury employs his day.
  An Ox by chance o'erheard his moan,
And thus rebuk'd the lazy drone.
  Dare you at partial Fate repine?
How kind 's your lot compar'd with mine!
Decreed to toil, the barb'rous knife
Hath ſever'd me from ſocial life;
Urg'd by the ſtimulating goad,
I drag the cumbrous wagon's load:
'Tis mine to tame the ſtubborn plain,
Break the ſtiff ſoil, and houſe the grain;
Yet I without a murmur bear
The various labours of the year.
But then, conſider, that one day
(Perhaps the hour 's not far away)
You, by the duties of your poſt,
Shall turn the ſpit when I 'm the roaſt;
And for reward ſhall ſhare the feaſt,
I mean, ſhall pick my bones at leaſt.
  Till now, th' aſtoniſh'd Cur replies,
I look'd on all with envious eyes.
How falſe we judge by what appears!
All creatures feel their ſev'ral cares.
If thus yon' mighty beaſt complains,
Perhaps man knows ſuperiour pains.
Let envy then no more torment:
Think on the Ox, and learn content.

Thus ſaid, cloſe following at her heel,
With cheerful heart he mounts the wheel.

FABLE XVI.

THE RAVENS, THE SEXTON, AND THE EARTHWORM.

To Laura.

Laura, methinks you're over nice.
True; flatt'ry is a ſhocking vice;
Yet ſure, whene'er the praiſe is juſt,
One may commend without diſguſt.
Am I a privilege deny'd,
Indulg'd by ev'ry tongue beſide?
How ſingular are all your ways!
A woman, and averſe to praiſe!
If 't is offence ſuch truths to tell,
Why do your merits thus excel?
Since then I dare not ſpeak my mind,
A truth conſpicuous to mankind;
Tho' in full luſtre ev'ry grace
Diſtinguiſh your celeſtial face;
Tho' beauties of inferiour ray
(Like ſtars before the orb of day)
Turn pale and fade; I check my lays,
Admiring what I dare not praiſe.
If you the tribute due diſdain,
The Muſe's mortifying ſtrain

Shall, like a woman in mere ſpite,
Set beauty in a moral light.
  Tho' ſuch revenge might ſhock the ear
Of many a celebrated fair,
I mean that ſuperficial race
Whoſe thoughts ne'er reach beyond their face.
What's that to you? I but diſpleaſe
Such ever-girliſh ears as theſe.
Virtue can brook the thoughts of age,
That laſts the ſame thro' ev'ry ſtage.
Tho' you by time muſt ſuffer more
Than ever woman loſt before,
To age is ſuch indiff'rence ſhown,
As if your face were not your own.
Were you by Antoninus taught?
Or is it native ſtrength of thought,
That thus, without concern or fright,
You view yourſelf by Reaſon's light?
  Thoſe eyes, of ſo divine a ray,
What are they? mould'ring, mortal clay.
Thoſe features, caſt in heav'nly mould,
Shall, like my coarſer earth grow old;
Like common graſs the faireſt flow'r
Muſt feel the hoary ſeaſon's pow'r.
  How weak, how vain, is human pride!
Dares man upon himſelf confide?
The wretch who glories in his gain
Amaſſes heaps on heaps in vain.

Why lose we life in anxious cares,
To lay in hoards for future years?
Can those (when tortur'd by disease)
Cheer our sick heart, or purchase ease?
Can those prolong one gasp of breath,
Or calm the troubled hour of death?
  What's beauty? Call ye that your own?
A flow'r that fades as soon as blown.
What's man in all his boast of sway?
Perhaps the tyrant of a day.
  Alike the laws of life take place
Thro' ev'ry branch of human race.
The monarch of long regal line
Was rais'd from dust as frail as mine.
Can he pour health into his veins?
Or cool the fever's restless pains?
Can he (worn down in Nature's course)
New-brace his feeble nerves with force?
Can he (how vain is mortal pow'r!)
Stretch life beyond the destin'd hour?
  Consider, Man; weigh well thy frame;
The king, the beggar, is the same.
Dust form'd us all. Each breathes his day,
Then sinks into his native clay.
  Beneath a venerable yew,
That in the lonely churchyard grew,
Two Ravens sate. In solemn croak
Thus one his hungry friend bespoke.

Methinks I ſcent ſome rich repaſt;
The ſavour ſtrengthens with the blaſt;
Snuff then, the promis'd feaſt inhale;
I taſte the carcaſs in the gale.
Near yonder trees the farmer's ſteed,
From toil and ev'ry drudg'ry freed,
Hath groan'd his laſt. A dainty treat!
To birds of taſte delicious meat.
  A Sexton, buſy at his trade,
To hear their chat ſuſpends his ſpade.
Death ſtruck him with no farther thought,
Than merely as the fees he brought.
Was ever two ſuch blund'ring fowls,
In brains and manners leſs than owls!
Blockheads, ſays he, learn more reſpect;
Know ye on whom ye thus reflect?
In this ſame grave (who does me right
Muſt own the work is ſtrong and tight)
The 'Squire that yon' fair hall poſſeſt,
To-night ſhall lay his bones at reſt.
Whence could the groſs miſtake proceed?
The 'Squire was ſomewhat fat indeed.
What then? the meaneſt bird of prey
Such want of ſenſe could ne'er betray;
For ſure ſome diff'rence muſt be found
(Suppoſe the ſmelling organ ſound)
In carcaſſes, (ſay what we can)
Or where's the dignity of man?

With due reſpect to human race
The Ravens undertook the caſe.
In ſuch ſimilitude of ſcent
Man ne'er could think reflections meant.
As epicures extol a treat,
And ſeem their ſav'ry words to eat,
They prais'd dead horſe, luxurious food,
The ven'ſon of the preſcient brood.
The Sexton's indignation mov'd,
The mean compariſon reprov'd;
Their undiſcerning palate blam'd,
Which two-legg'd carrion thus defam'd.
Reproachful ſpeech from either ſide
The want of argument ſupply'd:
They rail, revile; as often ends
The conteſt of diſputing friends.
Hold, ſays the Fowl; ſince human pride
With confutation ne'er comply'd,
Let 's ſtate the caſe, and then refer
The knotty point, for taſte may err.
As thus he ſpoke, from out the mould
An Earthworm, huge of ſize, unroll'd
His monſtrous length: they ſtrait agree
To chuſe him as their referee:
So to th' experience of his jaws
Each ſtates the merits of the cauſe.
He paus'd, and, with a ſolemn tone,
Thus made his ſage opinion known.

On carcaſſes of ev'ry kind
This maw hath elegantly din'd;
Provok'd by luxury or need,
On beaſt, or fowl, or man, I feed:
Such ſmall diſtinction 's in the favour,
By turns I chuſe the fancy'd flavour:
Yet I muſt own (that human beaſt)
A glutton is the rankeſt feaſt.
Man, ceaſe this boaſt; for human pride
Hath various tracks to range beſide.
The prince who kept the world in awe,
The judge whoſe dictate fix'd the law,
The rich, the poor, the great, the ſmall,
Are levell'd; death confounds 'em all.
Then think not that we reptiles ſhare
Such cates, ſuch elegance of fare;
The only true and real good
Of man was never vermine's food:
'Tis ſeated in th' immortal mind;
Virtue diſtinguiſhes mankind,
And that (as yet ne'er harbour'd here)
Mounts with the ſoul we know not where.
So Good-man Sexton, ſince the caſe
Appears with ſuch a dubious face,
To neither I the cauſe determine,
For diff'rent taſtes pleaſe diff'rent vermine.

AY AND NO.

A FABLE.

In Fable all things hold diſcourſe;
Then Words no doubt muſt talk of courſe.
Once on a time, near Cannon-row,
Two hoſtile adverbs, Ay and No,
Were haſt'ning to the field of fight,
And front to front ſtood oppoſite;
Before each gen'ral join'd the van,
Ay, the more courteous knight, began.
Stop, peeviſh Particle! beware!
I'm told you are not ſuch a bear,
But ſometimes yield when offer'd fair.
Suffer yon' folks awhile to tattle;
'Tis we who muſt decide the battle.
Whene'er we war on yonder ſtage,
With various fate and equal rage,
The nation trembles at each blow
That No gives Ay, and Ay gives No;
Yet in expenſive long contention,
We gain nor office, grant, or penſion.
Why then ſhould kinsfolks quarrel thus?
(For two of you make one of us.)
To ſome wiſe ſtateſman let us go,
Where each his proper uſe may know:

He may admit two such commanders,
And make those wait who serv'd in Flanders.
Let 's quarter on a great man's tongue,
A treas'ry lord, not Maister Y———g.
Obsequious at his high command,
Ay shall march forth to tax the land;
Impeachments No can best resist,
And Ay support the civil list:
Ay, quick as Caesar, wins the day,
And No, like Fabius, by delay.
Sometimes in mutual sly disguise,
Let Ay's seem No's, and No's seem Ay's;
Ay's be in courts denials meant,
And No's in bishops' give consent.
   Thus Ay propos'd—and, for reply,
No, for the first time, answer'd Ay!
They parted with a thousand kisses,
And fight e'er since for pay, like Swisses.

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From the APOLLO PRESS,
by the MARTINS,
May 15. 1784.

THE END.